

SADLER'S WELLS' 20TH ANNIVERSARY WEEK

Sadler's Wells celebrates the 20th anniversary of its current building by highlighting the exciting future of dance talent. During the anniversary week, Sadler's Wells introduces new distinctive voices with two mixed programmes of work commissioned by the theatre, as part of its '20 for 20' anniversary commissions.

Reckonings features new work by a new generation of UK-based dance-makers, **Botis Seva**, **Julie Cunningham** and **Alessandra Seutin**. In the Lilian Baylis Studio, the inaugural **Young Associates** present a mixed bill showcasing the originality and promise that propelled them into selection for the new initiative, launched earlier this year. These initiatives demonstrate Sadler's Wells' commitment to supporting artists at all stages of their careers.

Young Associates
Mixed Bill
Tuesday 9 & Wednesday 10 October
Tickets: £12; £6 concessions

LILIAN BAYLIS STUDIO
WORLD PREMIERE



An engaging mixed bill, and the first opportunity to see the work of the inaugural Young Associates, this new Sadler's Wells initiative aims to both celebrate and support young artists under the age of 25 as they begin to embark on their choreographic careers. Choreographers **Anthony Matsena**, **Wilhelmina Ojanen**, **Ruby Portus** and **Christopher Thomas** showcase the innovative talent and original voices that have marked them out as 'ones to watch'.

Fully supported and mentored by established choreographers – Theo Clinkard, Bryony Kimmins, Arthur Pita and Sadler's Wells Associate Artist Russell Maliphant – the Young Associates are innovative grassroots choreographers who play with narrative, improvisation and pertinent themes, including feminism, in their work.

A Sadler's Wells 20th Anniversary Commission

A Sadler's Wells Production

Julie Cunningham / Alesandra Seutin / Botis Seva
Reckonings

Thursday 11 - Saturday 13 October

Tickets: £20

WORLD PREMIERE



In *Reckonings*, Sadler's Wells presents three commissions by a new generation of UK based dance-makers: Sadler's Wells New Wave Associate **Julie Cunningham**, **Alesandra Seutin** and **Botis Seva**. These choreographers reflect a variety of dance styles – from post-modern dance to contemporary African and hip hop theatre. Intertwined with socio-political issues, the pieces tackle subjects including race representation, gender, identity, visibility and religion.

Reckonings showcases fresh, distinctive voices who help us see the world in a different light, and open up challenging new perspectives.

Julie Cunningham recently launched Julie Cunningham Company after 15 years of dancing with the renowned Merce Cunningham Dance Company and Michael Clark Company. Alesandra Seutin founded Vocab Dance Company in 2007 and has been making work, performing and teaching internationally for over a decade. Botis Seva and his collective Far From The Norm have previously performed at Sadler's Wells with *Breakin' Convention*, and curated a Wild Card evening. Using the foundations of hip hop, he has created a physical dance language of his own. Botis will be Guest Artistic Director for National Youth Dance Company for 2018/2019.

Sadler's Wells has partnered with **Channel 4's Random Acts** to commission three original films from the artists for broadcast this year. The first, ***Reach***, is a collaboration between Botis Seva and Billy Boyd Cape, for broadcast on 7 August. Further details below.

A Sadler's Wells 20th Anniversary Commission

A Sadler's Wells Production

Free post-show talk: Thursday 11 October

Alistair Spalding, Sadler's Wells' Artistic Director and Chief Executive, says:

"Sadler's Wells exists to enable talented artists of all backgrounds to create dance that brings a rich and diverse range of aesthetics, styles and stories to our stages. For our 20th anniversary, we celebrate our past achievements with our eyes firmly on the future. Julie Cunningham, Alesandra Seutin and Botis Seva possess fresh and distinctive choreographic voices that they're not afraid to use to tackle current socio-political issues, each in their own style.

"Anthony Matsena, Wilhelmina Ojanen, Ruby Portus and Christopher Thomas are grabbing the opportunity to experiment and define their own movement language with both hands, focusing on themes close to their hearts. These two programmes reaffirm our commitment to nurture artists and present work that resonates with our audience. Dance is at its most relevant and powerful when, after seeing a performance, we can make better sense of our own and others' experience."

Press Nights: Young Associates Tuesday 9 October at 7:30pm
***Reckonings* Thursday 11 October at 7.30pm**

Press Contact: Alicia Powell on alicia.powell@sadlerswells.com or on 0207 863 8112

Press images can be downloaded from <http://media.sadlerswells.com> – please register your details to login.

-ENDS-

Listings information:

WORLD PREMIERE
Young Associates, Mixed Bill
Lilian Baylis Studio, EC1R 4TN
Tuesday 9 - Wednesday 10 October
Performances at 7:30pm
Tickets: £12; £6 concessions
Ticket Office: 020 7863 8000 or www.sadlerswells.com

WORLD PREMIERE
Julie Cunningham / Alesandra Seutin / Botis Seva
Reckonings
Sadler's Wells, EC1R 4TN
Thursday 11 - Saturday 13 October
Performances at 7:30pm
Tickets: £20
Ticket Office: 020 7863 8000 or www.sadlerswells.com

Notes to Editors

ABOUT SADLER'S WELLS

Sadler's Wells is a world-leading creative organisation dedicated to dance in all its forms. With over three centuries of theatrical heritage and a year-round programme of performances and learning activities, it is the place where artists come together to create dance, and where people of all backgrounds come to experience it – to take part, learn, experiment and be inspired.

Audiences of over half a million come to its London theatres each year, with many more enjoying its touring productions at venues across the UK and around the world, and accessing its content through digital channels.

Sadler's Wells commissions, produces and presents more new dance work than any other theatre in the world, embracing the popular and the unknown. Since 2005, it has helped to bring over 160 new dance works to the stage, many of them involving its 16 Associate Artists, three Resident Companies and four Associate Companies – the most exciting talents working in dance today.

It also nurtures the next generation of talent through research and development, running the National Youth Dance Company and a range of programmes including Wild Card, New Wave Associates, Open Art Surgery and Summer University. Sadler's Wells' learning and engagement activities reach over 25,000 annually through programmes that take dance out into the community and invite communities into the theatre. Projects include community productions and the renowned Company of Elders, its resident over-60s performance group, while events range from pre and post-show talks with dance artists to classes, workshops and assisted performances.

Located in Islington, north London, the current building is the sixth to have stood on site since entrepreneur Richard Sadler first established the theatre in 1683. The venue has played an illustrious role in the history of theatre ever since, with The Royal Ballet, Birmingham Royal Ballet and English National Opera having all started at Sadler's Wells.

www.sadlerswells.com

CHANNEL 4 RANDOM ACTS FILMS

Sadler's Wells has partnered with **Channel 4's Random Acts** to commission three original films from **Julie Cunningham**, **Alessandra Seutin** and **Botis Seva** for broadcast this year. Linked to the new works the artists are creating for **Reckonings** in the 20th Anniversary week, the films are creative entities in their own right, offering the three distinctive younger artists an opportunity to tell their stories in a different medium to a wider audience.

For **Botis Seva's** film **Reach**, director **Billy Boyd Cape** collaborated with choreographer Botis and his hip hop theatre collective Far From The Norm to explore emotional themes of love, abandonment and fatherhood. **Reach** will be broadcast on Channel 4 at midnight on **Tuesday 7 August**, and will be available to view at the [online home](#) of Random Acts the following day.

Reach is produced by Academy Films and Artemisia Films in association with Sadler's Wells and Little Dot Studios for Channel 4.

Commissioning Editor, Catherine Bray
Production Executive, Fiona Lamptey
Executive Producers, Alistair Spalding and Eva Martinez
Producer, Juliette Harris
Series Producer, Anne Beresford

LITTLE DOT STUDIOS

Little Dot Studios is one of the fastest growing next-generation media companies in the UK. They manage social video for over 100 global entertainment and sports brands, from The Graham Norton Show to Love Island, Channel 4 and Film4 to Discovery and Comedy Central, generating 3 billion views every month. Little Dot also produce original TV series, and work closely with filmmakers and influencers to develop and create content for platforms and brands including Samsung, Pepsi, Honda and Porsche.

YOUNG ASSOCIATES

This new programme, launched in February 2018, nurtures early career choreographers, enabling them to understand how to navigate the world of dance production – from collaboration to contracts and costumes, and everything in-between. The initiative supports talented 18 to 24-year-olds for two years, providing a crucial first step into their career as choreographers. The artists receive a tailored programme of professional development and support, including the opportunity to present their work as part of the Sadler's Wells artistic programme.

ALESANDRA SEUTIN

An international performer, choreographer and teacher, Alesandra was born in Harare, Zimbabwe, grew up in Brussels and now lives in London. She studied dance in different parts of the world including Europe, Africa and the United States. She holds a Diploma in dance theatre from Trinity Laban and a degree in choreography and performance from Middlesex University. Alesandra also trained at the École des Sables of Germaine Acogny (Senegal), where she has also worked with choreographers including Nora Chipaumire, the late Pierre Dousaint, Flora Thefaine, Pedro Pauwels, Gabriel Smeets, Rui Moreira and David Zambrano.

Alesandra has been running Vocab Dance Company since 2007. She combines African traditional dance with contemporary dance and hip hop to create distinctly Afro-European dance theatre. Few other British artists are working to explore what African dance can become when fused with other dance forms to explore contemporary issues. Alesandra is the only UK dance artist to be a certified Germaine Acogny teacher and ambassador. In 2014, Alesandra became a Trailblazers Champion for The Association of Dance of the African Diaspora for her continuous contribution as an artist of the African Diaspora in the UK, bridging the gap between African and Contemporary dance. Her work has been performed at venues including Sadler's Wells, The Queen Elizabeth Hall, The Riley Theatre, Laban Theatre, The Place, Stratford Circus, The Yorkshire Playhouse, The Arcola, Lindsey Theatre, Purcell Room as well as internationally.

BOTIS SEVA

Botis is a dance artist, choreographer and director working within the realms of contemporary dance, physical theatre and hip hop. He was awarded the Bonnie Bird Choreography Fund, Marion North Mentoring Award in 2015 and has won two international choreographic competitions: Choreography 30 in Hannover, Germany and Copenhagen's International Choreographic Competition. Botis' recent dance credits include InNoForm for the British Dance Edition & Laban Theatre, Woman of Sun for Greenwich Dance & Trinity Laban Partnership Compass Commission, outdoor work H.O.H for Without Walls, GDIF & Norfolk & Norwich Festival and TuTuMucky for Scottish Dance Theatre. Botis and his collective Far From the Norm have previously performed at Sadler's Wells with Breakin' Convention and curated a Wild Card evening in the Lilian Baylis Studio.

JULIE CUNNINGHAM

Julie Cunningham has worked professionally as a dance artist for 15 years performing both nationally and internationally. After training at the Rambert School of Ballet and Contemporary Dance in London, Julie worked with Ballett der Stadt Theater Koblenz, Germany, Merce Cunningham Dance Company, Michael Clark Company, and Boris Charmatz.

Julie is a guest teacher at Trinity Laban and Zurich University of the Arts. In 2014, Julie was awarded "Outstanding Modern Performance" at the Critics Circle National Dance Awards for 'New Work' with Michael Clark Company, and was nominated for the emerging artist award for choreography in 2016.

Julie was the inaugural Leverhulme Choreography Fellow at Rambert and was part of the dance artist/curator mentorship program through Siobhan Davies Dance. In 2018 Julie became a Sadler's Wells New Wave Associate, and Associate Artist with Dance East. Julie

Cunningham & Company was launched in 2017 at the Barbican, and became associate company of Rambert in 2018.

RUBY PORTUS

A proud Bristolian, Ruby toured with National Youth Dance Company under the artistic direction of Akram Khan before training at London Contemporary Dance School. Here, she worked with artists including Liz Aggiss and Punchdrunk, and graduated with a First Class BA (Hons). Now a member of VERVE (the postgraduate company at Northern School of Contemporary Dance), she has performed internationally in works by Matthew Robinson, Lenka Vagnerová, Hannes Langolf and Sita Ostheimer, and is completing her MA in Dance Performance. Ruby is keenly developing her artistic voice, with her work showcased at Tate Modern and The Place. She is passionate about socio-political topics and is curious to draw upon these in her creative projects.

WILHELMINA OJANEN

Born in Finland and raised in Santiago, Chile, Wilhelmina began her professional studies in Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, graduating with a BA (Hons) in Contemporary Dance. During her time at Laban she had the privilege of working with choreographers such as Sara Wookey, Stephanie Schober and Ben Wright. Alongside her training, she has worked with artists such as Hagit Yakira and the makers of Reykjavik Dance Festival. Wilhelmina is currently completing her Masters degree in Dance Performance at Trinity Laban as part of Transitions Dance Company. Beside performing and teaching, Wilhelmina's passion lies in creating her own choreographic work.

CHRISTOPHER THOMAS

Christopher started professionally acting in London's West End under directorship of Cameron Mackintosh, Andrew Lloyd Webber and Bill Kenwright. He then danced vocationally at The Royal Ballet School and Rambert School of Ballet and Contemporary Dance, where he graduated with a First Class BA (Hons) in 2017. During that time, he has performed extensively with Rambert Dance Company and is currently working for Mark Bruce Company on their latest production of *Macbeth*. Christopher is co-director of his own company Retrospect Dance Theatre, which has performed at various European and UK platforms. Christopher has been awarded the Charlotte Kirkpatrick Award 2016 and Young Choreographer 2017.

ANTHONY MATSENA

Choreographer and dancer Anthony Matsena was born in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe and was raised in Swansea, Wales. He began dancing from a young age, training in hip hop and street dance. He then started contemporary and ballet training aged 19 at Gower College Swansea, where he joined County Youth Dance Company and Turning Pointe Dance Academy Swansea. Antony has been a company member of National Youth Dance Wales (NYDW), creating and touring works by Kerry Nicholls, Odette Hughes (Studio Wayne McGregor), Theo Clinkard, and Eleesha Drennan. Through NYDW, Anthony performed Kerry Nicholls' *aM* (2015) at Sadler's Wells. Anthony continued his training at London Contemporary Dance School, where he will graduate from in 2018. Whilst training at LCDS, Anthony has performed works by Ohad Naharin, Hofesh Shechter, Richard Alston, as well as performing professionally in works by Joseph Toonga for Just Us Dance Theatre. Antony is also the co-founder of Matsena Performance Theatre.