

# artwork

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C O M M U N I T Y   A R T S   N E T W O R K   S A



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 Community Arts Network of SA  
 278 Halifax St Adelaide SA 5000  
 Ph (08) 232 4343 Fax (08) 232 4336

The Community Arts Network of SA is a member based organisation. It forms part of a national network of sister organisations in most capital cities across Australia.

**AIM**

The Community Arts Network aims to support arts development and creative expression at community level towards the ideal of diverse and vibrant community cultures.

**COMMUNITY ARTS**

Arts practice and creative expression are at the heart of a community's vitality. People have always come together to sing, tell stories, enact rituals, to celebrate, to mourn and to mark significant events in their lives. Besides being able to see great art, people need to actively participate in these activities. This is what is meant by the term community arts, it might be a new name but it is not a new idea.

**LOCAL CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT**

It is through the things we do together as groups and communities that we gain a sense of collective identity, a sense of place and a sense of belonging. When we value these things a positive concern for our social well being follows and we begin to take charge of our present and shape the future to meet our aspirations.

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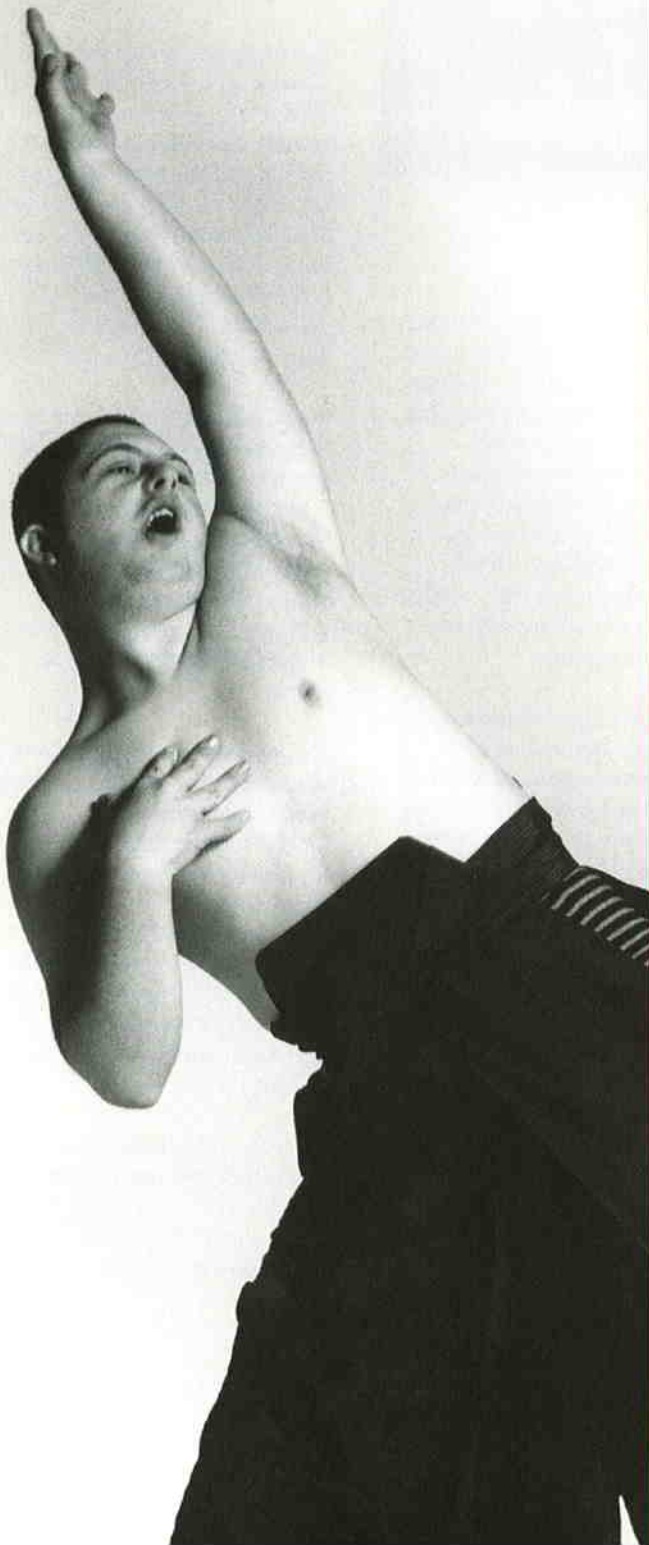
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# JOURNEYS

Restless Dance Co's Ziggy Kuster performing in Gigibori. Photo: Alex Makeyev

**NICK HUGHES**

**Nick Hughes explores the artistic philosophy of Artistic Director, Sally Chance — a philosophy which drives a unique young people's dance company that Sally has developed in South Australia.**

**To** see a performance by the Adelaide-based dance company 'Restless Dance' is to be taken on a journey, for you cannot help but be transported by the extraordinary tenderness and caring that the dancers express to one another. These are not actors feigning emotions; there is no pretence here. These warm human exchanges are really happening in front of you. Each and every performer is present all of the time, and they have the courage to reveal themselves through the medium of dance. It is the very way that the group operates — in a spirit of respect, tolerance and clarity — that enables its members to use their art to transport their audience.



*Gigibori*

**It is the very way that the group operates — in a spirit of respect, tolerance and clarity — that enables them to use their art to transport their audience.**

Restless is a unique dance company in that it is composed of a mixture of people — some with a disability and some without a disability. The company members have all undergone their own personal journeys and development since they began working under the guidance and direction of Sally Chance in November 1991. At that time Sally was working with two separate dance groups.

One was made up of about ten young people with a disability (mostly Down syndrome) who had been inspired by working with her on a previous project. This project had culminated in a performance in Norwood Concert Hall in August 1991 and had involved about ninety people. Sally describes the result as wild: 'the energy was just unreal. And, I thought, "This has to carry on!"'

The other group with which Sally was working involved young people (without a disability) who were doing dance and voice workshops over four weekends at Carclew Youth Arts Centre.

Sally describes what happened: 'It occurred to me that it would be good to cobble the two groups together. That's literally what I did, I mean, all my instincts were saying "Do it!", even though my belief at the time was that community cultural development of this nature needed to be organic, and take time, and evolve. But this didn't at all — I just whopped the two groups together.' The rightness of her instinct is attested to by the quality of the dance theatre that Restless has produced.

The integrated group only had time to work on one very modest production, which was almost entirely unfunded, before Sally's visa ran out and she had to return to the UK. However, the risks that Sally had taken and the response to her work were enough to convince a number of people in Adelaide that the work should continue and that more risks should be taken.

Virginia Hyam (Carclew's Project Manager), and Robin Goldsworthy and the Come Out Festival management shared a gut feeling that the company was, potentially, pretty skilled and worth supporting. So they took a huge risk and promoted the company as a major project of the 1993 Come Out Festival.

Virginia Hyam had also, serendipitously, come across the hauntingly beautiful musical work of Colin Offord and she applied for funding for him to work with the company. Thus, when Sally returned with a new visa in January 1993, she was able to start work straight away on a major work for the following May. This evolved into *Ikons*, one of the significant artistic successes of the festival.

Since then the company has produced three other major works: *Love Dances* for the Adelaide Fringe Festival in 1994; *Talking Down* for the Come Out Festival in 1995 (this