

vincent dance theatre

MOVING PEOPLE AND MAKING THEM THINK



The Motherland cast

PARTICIPATION PROGRAMME

Since 1994, Vincent Dance Theatre (VDT) produces powerful, engaging dance theatre work that tours nationally and internationally, accompanied by an extensive programme of participatory and professional development activity.

Directed by Charlotte Vincent, VDT is an international ensemble of multi-tasking collaborators who make devised performance work together. VDT's acclaimed production **Motherland** provides the starting point for much of the company's participation programme in 2014.

Motherland is a funny and moving show about 'having it all'. VDT's brilliant, multi-talented ensemble of men, women and children take a look at the gender they were born into and the price they are paying for it. Our spring tour of **Motherland** kicks off at Queen Elizabeth Hall, South Bank Centre, London on March 7 2014.

VDT's participation and professional development programme is facilitated by experienced company members and is **available throughout 2014**. For more information about this '*admirably uncompromising*' show (*The Times*) and where you can see it, go to www.motherland.org.uk

VDT's APPROACH

VDT will work closely with you to design and then deliver tailor-made participatory activity appropriate to your individual needs. VDT's participation programme draws on Director/Choreographer Charlotte Vincent's vision and values to stimulate, provoke and challenge a wide range of participants with rigorous thinking and a very British humour. Despite the serious content VDT's workshops are always great fun.

VDT's participation programme usually falls into 3 areas of activity:

1. **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:** intensive, skill-based workshops, master classes and residencies investigating choreography, composition and performance, blending movement, music and language and designed to expand notions of what 'dance' can be. These are aimed at practicing and emerging artists and students studying live performance in formal education settings (A-level/Diploma/B-Tec/BA/MA).
2. **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:** imaginative, experiential, practical workshops, residencies, exhibitions, installations and performance projects that encourage the general public of all ages and abilities to participate in movement, music, performance and visual arts activity.
3. **IALOGUE EVENTS:** critical, political debates, provocations, panel discussions, pre and post show discussions, staged interviews and open forums captured and archived online via www.thetable.org.uk for the general public, Sociology, Cultural Studies, Women's Studies, Performance, Music, Drama and English Literature students, peer artists and practitioners.

Through our participation programme **VDT** aims to:

- Move people and make them think
- Encourage a range of people to engage with the performing and visual arts
- Encourage authentic individual creativity, exploration and self expression
- Encourage group sharing and a collective sense of belonging
- Encourage debate around gender politics
- Expand notions of what dance can be
- Collect, share and disseminate personal stories from the local community
- Encourage attendance to live performances in the local host venue
- Increase and diversify audiences for 'dance' and performance
- Reach a place where audiences associate 'dance' with the investigation of innate movement and 'theatre' with the exploration of personal, universal stories

VDT's APPROACH is:

- Inclusive
- Non elitist
- Facilitative
- Interdisciplinary
- Intergenerational
- Intellectually rigorous
- Fun!

VDT workshop with The Grace Performance Group



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

VDT makes movement work that moves people and makes them think. Our professional development work is accessible, thought provoking and both physically and intellectually challenging.

Whilst technically highly skilled, VDT's performance work appears 'natural' and effortless, not demonstrative or 'forced' or vain. Through structured tasks and improvisation, VDT seeks to create movement and music material that comes from the inside out, rather than material created or composed from the outside and imposed 'onto' a body or an instrument. Improvisation is at the core of all we do. VDT encourages the notion that the body is intelligent and, given permission, individual and expressive 'material' will always emerge.



Charlotte Vincent teaching at The Point

VDT's **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT** work focuses on the devising process and enables participants to find structured ways to develop clear conceptual and compositional ideas and to access technical, emotional and individually distinguishable material for performance.

A VDT Workshop (2.5 hours minimum) for students or professionals may begin with a yoga informed / release based class, working with breath, warming up from the inside out, followed by an improvisation based, choreographic or compositional workshop that works across disciplines and investigated the devising process. These sessions tend to focus on movement, text, and performance skills with a strong, in depth emphasis on effortlessness, generosity, heightened awareness, gaze, repetition, natural presence, task setting, connecting with an audience and finding humour in performance.

A VDT week long intensive **professional development residency**, is an opportunity for a group of individuals to explore in detail the devising process, gathering performance skills and insight that may profoundly shift their own creative practice. Workshops and residencies primarily investigate the devising process, performance skills and the nature of collaboration and may include:

- Making clear conceptual and contextual choices
- Performing with authority
- Exposure when private acts become public
- Emotional daring
- Trust
- The impact of design on performance
- The use of objects from the real world in performance
- The 'real', the 'artificial' and 'the uncertain' in performance
- What are you trying to say? How to find an appropriate language to say it?

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Examples of these types of events, available to all ages and abilities, include:

DROP IN ENGAGEMENT

An **evolving drop-in installation** could be set up in a space within your venue or a pop up space close by. A space facilitated by experienced members of VDT that starts empty and then fills up with the stories, experiences, memories and ideas of audiences who visit it and people who pass by. A playful, interactive physical environment in which people explore themselves and add their thoughts to, forming a snapshot in time of your town or city and its response to the themes inherent in **Motherland** (men and women, motherhood, the impact of body image pressures on young people, hope).

WORKSHOP ENGAGEMENT

The cast of **Motherland** are able to offer a menu of creative, participatory cross-disciplinary workshops adapted for different groups, abilities and ages. Workshops can be offered from three hour one off sessions to week-long intensive residencies investigating movement, music, writing, visual / installation practice and performance. All workshop processes share a common goal of giving voice and creative expression to people's experiences and ideas.



The Garden of Hope, installation at Wales Millennium Centre

VDT DIALOGUE EVENTS

These will be devised and programmed in collaboration to stimulate debate and bring communities together. Using a variety of participatory methods to engage different communities in dialogue, core members of VDT could host or take part in:

- **Panel discussions** (eg: around feminism, equality, gender or the over-sexualisation of young women, for example <http://www.thetable.org.uk/activity/charlotte-vincents-presentation-from-the-national-choreographers-conference> or <http://www.vincentdt.com/projects/archive/feeling/index.html> or) p
- **Curated discussions and provocations**, for example (<http://www.chisenhaledancespace.co.uk/project/the-big-30-dance-politics-performance-and-discussion>) c
- **Symposiums** around performance work and cross disciplinary, intergenerational s

performance, for example <http://www.vincentdt.com/projects/juncture/index.html> or <http://www.vincentdt.com/projects/northern-area-dance/index.html>

PARTICIPANTS FEEDBACK FROM RECENT VDT ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMME

‘A very profound experience ...a beautiful space for me to tell stories about my life and to tease out from inside me what hope is. I feel very touched that we’ve been able to have this experience today and appreciate the work you’re doing.’ **Over 55’s Participant**

‘A really emotional journey for everyone. An opportunity to look back and re-visit. It was illuminating and eye-opening and a bit scary. We were able to feel free, and even I seemed natural in the space’ **Intergenerational Workshop Participant**

‘Made me question and challenge everything I thought about dance and the way I move. Amazingly thought provoking, I will be leaving here with a new sense and awareness of what I think when I’m dancing. A very enjoyable, mind-stimulating workshop. **Dance Student**

‘I loved it! I love that it broke down the barriers between different arts i.e. dance, text, drama, music. I loved the freedom of it.’ **Dance Student**

‘Intrigued about how people opened up. It so easily sounded like young people being heard. It’s moving for people to be heard.’ **15 year old, Performance Workshop**

I found it interesting I found it moving, I loved doing it. At first it was about my images from being a parent so about observation but then I started stripping those observation levels away. When I got to the elder stage it was hard because I realised “oh I am here”. **Intergenerational Workshop**

I feel humbled and privileged to have shared people’s moments – its ok to let go
Intergenerational Workshop

What struck me most was the honesty and truthfulness so we felt safe under this umbrella what a beautiful diversity of ages and everybody has something to offer quite a journey.
Intergenerational Workshop

VDT is keen to work with as diverse range of participants as possible. Our Participation Programme will be tailored to your particular context and the specific needs of your existing groups or to seek out those individuals and groups you have yet to reach.

If you would like to engage in VDT’s participation work, please contact **the VDT office 01273 911 616** or email admin@vincentdt.com

www.vincentdt.com



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