

## What Now 2013 Curatorial Statements

### **Dancing In Context**

My starting point initially began with finding out where and how dance seems to be happening. Context means more than geography, resources and platforms for presenting. There is a wider sense of how things are moving now and the underlying urgency within that.

Social choreography has achieved significance as a term at a time when we seem to be turning again to the potential of collective bodies, while the productive value of individuality appears to be on its last legs. Dance is well positioned to respond to and catalyse such cultural change because it is a discipline that has historically depended upon shared practice, not least of all in the form of the dance class. For this year's what\_now festival I wanted to draw attention to how bodies already exist in collective relationships. I believe there is critical agency in the way that we direct 'togetherness' in the current time that we are living. Collective practice is essential in this era of austerity measures when dance artists are having to rethink the nature of sustainable ways of working and fruitful contexts in geographical and financial terms. what\_now 2013 consequently expands the notion of dance to include dialogic and participatory strategies in performance, screenings, exhibited work and talks. How can we walk/run/think through known settings in different ways and with unfamiliar physicality?

These three days of the festival are intended to be a space for commentary and reflection upon the migrations and collaborations across borders of different kinds that contemporary dance artists are pursuing.

**Frank Bock, March 2013**

### **From Independent Dance (ID)**

What are the legitimate concerns of dance today? In its fifth incarnation, this edition of the 'What...' festival builds on the energy each previous festival has generated in answering that question. Kick-started by Gill Clarke (1954-2011), co-director of Independent Dance, the

festivals act on a desire to showcase a new generation of dance artists. Each brings to the foreground artists and ideas that are not always given a visible platform.

These few concentrated days have become a central moment in ID's calendar – of celebration, enquiry and action.

Each festival has a different flavour, as it organically grows from the vision of invited artists acting as curators, working in dialogue with the many generous contributors. For **what\_now** it has been a pleasure to work with Frank Bock; and although each curator adds a new voice, all the 'What ...' festivals remain true to Gill's passion: to give visibility to a broader understanding of embodiment, movement and how this in turn manifests in the work from choreographers and dance artists today.

So the festival fulfills a core aim of Independent Dance: bringing to life a public moment that creates space and a framework for dance artists to share their practice, exchange ideas and deepen their enquiry, in contact with an audience.

ID would like to thank the participating artists for their enthusiastic commitment to this project; **what\_now** assistant curator Luke Pell for his contribution; and Siobhan Davies Dance for their partnership in the festival.

#### **from Siobhan Davies Dance (SDD)**

The 'What...' Festivals are the fruit of the partnership with Siobhan Davies Dance with the Studios being the central venue for the festival since it started, and also where Independent Dance is based year-round. Both ID and SDD share a passion for supporting adventurous dance artists in their development and creating public platforms to showcase their work. As two artist-led organisations, the support and encouragement of dance artists and their ideas is a common endeavor within our distinctive programme of activities.