

CREATIVE LEARNING RESOURCE

DANCE

# ARCHIVES OF HUMANITY

CO3 CONTEMPORARY DANCE



Image: Daniel Carson

**PERTH  
FESTIVAL**

Founder



Principal Partner



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*Perth Festival acknowledges the Noongar people who continue to practise their values, language, beliefs and knowledge on their kwobidak boodjar.*

*They remain the spiritual and cultural birdiyangara of this place and we honour and respect their caretakers and custodians and the vital role Noongar people play for our community and our Festival to flourish.*

Acknowledgment developed by Associate Artist Kylie Bracknell with support from Perth Festival's Noongar Advisory Circle (Vivienne Binyarn Hansen, Mitchella Waljin Hutchins, Carol Innes, Barry McGuire, Richard Walley OAM & Roma Yibiyung Winmar)

# SYNOPSIS

A compassionate and empowering new dance work exploring humanity and the tension between grace and truth, *Archives of Humanity* creates a living and emotive meditation on human existence, a reflection on where we suddenly and unexpectedly find ourselves today.

The work begins with an immersive and tactile journey through a remarkable set – a flock of birds, created by and carrying the stories of our WA community in isolation. Released, the birds united soar as a collective symbol of endurance and hope. These sweeping narratives, of memories, desires and aspirations lead you into the theatre.

A stunning score opens the performance, marking the next migration, echoing the movements of the dancers in a gradual and persistent climbing arc of cyclical patterns. Some of the art world's most striking scenes are reimagined in humanity's tumultuous bid to transcend. To rise, to fall, but to always try to rise again – together.

# CREDITS

**Conceived & Directed by** Raewyn Hill

**Composer** Eden Mulholland

**Dramaturg** Gavin Webberill

**Production Manager & Lighting Designer** Mark Haslam

**International Artist** Naoko Yoshimoto

**Set Designer** Bruce McKinven

**Co3 Dancers** Mitchell Aldridge, Claudia Alessi, Mitch Harvey, Storm Helmore, Alex Kay, Yilin Kong, David Mack, Matthew Morris, Jo Omodei, Otto Pye, Russell Thorpe, Luci Young

**WAAPA Secondees** Campbell Gately, Anna Milburne, Jess Pettitt, Nadia Priolo, Macon Riley, Aisha Samat, Sami Smith, Luther Wilson, Zach Wilson

**Intern** Arianwen Painter-Jones



Image: Stefan Gosatti

# KEY THEMES



## BAROQUE ART

*Archives of Humanity* explores the visual art of the Baroque period, especially the work of Caravaggio.

*What other shows, film, songs or movies can you think of that have been inspired by a painting?*



## CONTEMPORARY DANCE

Co3 is a contemporary dance company based in Perth. Contemporary dance is a fusion of styles that has been around since the 1950s.

*Have you seen contemporary dance before? What do you know about it?*



## SADAKO'S 1,001 CRANES

Sadako was a Japanese girl who folded 1,001 paper cranes when she was in hospital for treatment after the Hiroshima atomic bombs in World War Two. The set of *Archives of Humanity* is inspired by this story.



Image: Stefan Gosatti

# ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES



**WATCH** this short video exploring the story of Sadako and her paper cranes here:

[youtu.be/5wRabZXQ-hQ](https://youtu.be/5wRabZXQ-hQ)

*Can you make paper cranes? Or any other origami?*



**WATCH** a video of the *Archives of Humanity* development trailer:

[vimeo.com/452093640](https://vimeo.com/452093640)

*What do you notice about the ways the dancers are moving? What words would you use to describe them?*



## Q&A WITH CHOREOGRAPHER RAEWYN HILL

### How did you get to work on this project? Was it your idea?

The project started with an invitation from Perth Festival Artistic Director Iain Grandage to create a work of scale for the 2021 Program. The underlying theme of the work revolves around communities in crisis and how people respond. To reflect this theme, *Archives of Humanity* is performed by an intergenerational cast with artists ranging in age from 15 years to 55 years, their life experiences the underscore of the work.

### What's been your favourite part of the making process so far, and why?

Bringing together a cast of 22 dancers from WA. Celebrating the history that we have within the dance community in this state and sharing that legacy with the next generation.

### What's been the most difficult part of the making process so far, and why?

The greatest difficulty has been around the consistency of employment for the creative team. We have had to come in and out of process due to COVID restrictions. Although the pandemic has proven challenging to the creative process, the restrictions have also enabled something to come to the work that would not have come before.

### Are there any other artists, companies or works that have been an inspiration for this work?

Bill Viola's *The Raft* was a point of instigation for *Archives of Humanity*, it is a visceral moving portrait of human calamity. The work of Italian painter Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio from the late 16th and early 17th century has also been a great source of inspiration for his staged portraits of intense and violent realism. Naoko Yoshimoto, a Japanese sculptural artist, has provided a great wealth of inspiration, helping merge the stories of our community into the set for *Archives of Humanity*. Finally, Vivaldi's 'Gloria' has been a source of musical inspiration.

### What are you hoping the audience experiences when they see and hear this work?

*Archives of Humanity* is, for me, about truth. How the audience responds to that truth depends on the experiences they have had in their own lives. The work is an offering for this time and the people who witness it to respond and reflect in their own individual way. My work endeavours to set up an environment where audience members have the space to reflect and I encourage communication and conversation with those that they have come to see the work with.

### Why did you want to make this work?

*Archives of Humanity* fits into my life's body of work. Each work I create is a natural progression from the last in terms of themes, aesthetics and movement language. My artistic offerings over the last few years have focused on the gathering of community, the way that people communicate and the way that they support and care for each other. With *Archives of Humanity* I've delved deeper into that concept and created an environment of crisis and recovery that strangely ended up being in alignment with COVID and the pandemic even though the work was by no means a response to the situation, it was already in the making.

### How has it changed from the first idea to where it is now? Why did those changes happen?

The ideas have not changed since their first inception, they have evolved. Every day that we are in rehearsal is a day that we just fall deeper into the concepts and the questions around the work.

# BEFORE THE SHOW

## THE BIRD MAKERS PROJECT

For seven years Co3 Artistic Director Raewyn Hill and Japanese artist Naoko Yoshimoto have been weaving an Australian-Japanese creative connection. The central thread being framed around a love of sharing story and how the woven histories within the fabrics that surround us might speak louder than we think. Upon a visit to Hiroshima, Naoko spoke of the story of Sadako Sasaki and her 1,000 cranes. It was from here that the mission of making 1,001 black birds for the *Archives of Humanity* work in 2021 was born.

As audiences walk into Studio Underground to see *Archives of Humanity*, they will walk through 1,001 black fabric birds made by the community.



**WATCH** Raewyn talk about the project here:

[vimeo.com/429929565](https://vimeo.com/429929565)



**CREATE** an origami paper crane. There are some instructions here:

[instructables.com/How-to-make-a-Paper-Crane-1/](https://www.instructables.com/How-to-make-a-Paper-Crane-1/)



**LISTEN** to a podcast about the paper cranes story here:

[iheart.com/podcast/stuff-you-missed-in-history-cl-21124503/episode/sadako-sasakis-1000-cranes-part-1-30207482/](https://www.iheart.com/podcast/stuff-you-missed-in-history-cl-21124503/episode/sadako-sasakis-1000-cranes-part-1-30207482/)



Image: Stefan Gosatti

## CARAVAGGIO

The choreographer and designers of *Archives of Humanity* have taken inspiration from the works of Italian painter Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio in creating the show.

Arrogant, rebellious and a murderer, Caravaggio's short and tempestuous life matched the drama of his works. Characterised by their dramatic, almost theatrical lighting, Caravaggio's paintings were controversial, popular and hugely influential on succeeding generations of painters all over Europe.



**READ** an article outlining Caravaggio's wild life here:

[bbc.com/culture/article/20161010-why-caravaggio-was-a-shocking-as-his-paintings](https://www.bbc.com/culture/article/20161010-why-caravaggio-was-a-shocking-as-his-paintings)



**CREATE** a photo or drawing using this technique by following instructions here:

[mymodernmet.com/chiaroscuro-painting-technique/](https://www.mymodernmet.com/chiaroscuro-painting-technique/)

# ATTENDING LIVE PERFORMANCE

Live performance involves performers acting and interacting in real time, before your eyes. The audience is active in the way they view the performance: the performers on stage can hear and see you and your reactions and behaviour can contribute to, disrupt or disturb their performance. The audience can have a big influence on the energy, pace and vibe of the actors and the performance as a whole. Here's how you can help:



Image: Stefan Gosatti

## BE ON TIME

The show will start promptly, so leave heaps of time to find the venue and go to the toilet. Latecomers will not be admitted until an appropriate break in the show, and for many shows you won't be let in if you arrive late or leave the theatre during the show.

## THINGS WE WANT TO HEAR ...



Live performance is energised by positive audience reactions – laugh when it's funny, cry when it's sad and applaud at the end.

## ... AND THINGS WE DON'T



Food wrappers and plastic packets make a lot of noise. It is generally accepted that the audience does not eat during a performance.



Mobile phones must be switched off (not on vibrate). If your phone rings during a performance, it can be very embarrassing for you and very distracting for the performers. Even silently messaging is not cool, because the glow of the screen is off-putting for performers and audiences.



Chatting and whispering during the show is annoying for other audience members and can be very distracting for performers.

## PHOTOGRAPHS

We love seeing you at Festival events. Take photos in the foyer when you arrive or after the show, and tag us using [@PerthFest](#) and [#PerthFest](#), or re-post our stories with your hot takes, we love it!

Taking photos, videos or audio recordings is not allowed in the shows though. This is because of copyright issues of the designs and because of the whole distracting thing.

# AFTER THE SHOW

Co3 has developed a brand new app that provides exclusive behind the scenes access about *Archives of Humanity* and contemporary dance.

To hear the commentary, watch the videos and see the images, head to [co3.org.au](https://co3.org.au) for information on how to download the app!



Images: Stefan Gosatti

# REFLECTING ON LIVE PERFORMANCE

There are many different ways to write a review, as reviews express an individual's thoughts and feelings about a show.

Reviews should reflect how you felt about a show, not what you think you should have felt.

Here's a link to a handy template for you to WRITE a review of *Archives of Humanity*:

[perthfestival.com.au/media/lz3hwgdz/cl-resources-reviewing-live-performance-instructions-doc\\_20210111.pdf](https://perthfestival.com.au/media/lz3hwgdz/cl-resources-reviewing-live-performance-instructions-doc_20210111.pdf)

You don't have to be published in a newspaper to write a review. In the digital age, the act of reviewing has changed immensely. You can blog, Tweet, TikTok, Instagram, run a Facebook page ... it has enabled platforms for a broad range of voices to participate in the reviewing process that previously would not have been heard.



**WRITE** a 140-character Twitter review of *Archives of Humanity*



**VIEW** photos of the show by projecting them onto a whiteboard. Use a whiteboard marker to label the images with things you notice or remember from seeing the show.

Think about the music you could hear, the elements of visual design and of course the dancing and movement on stage.

# CURRICULUM LINKS

| SUBJECT AREA | YEAR LEVEL   | CONNECTIONS   |
|--------------|--------------|---|
| Dance        | Year 11 & 12 | Contextual knowledge, choreographic intent and dance language can all be explored through this show, including providing a case study for deeper analysis. In particular, teachers may wish to link this with Unit 2: Australian Dance, and Unit 4: Extending the Boundaries by examining the relationships between dance works, audiences and contexts, and how these contribute to the development of different perspectives.   |
| Visual Art   | Year 11 & 12 | Students and teachers can explore the historical, social, political, religious and other contextual factors that have shaped the development and production of artwork or movements in different times and places through viewing this work. In particular, Unit 3: Commentaries offers a way into recontextualising existing work contributes to meanings and messages in artwork, and how artists are influenced by pervasive ideas, events and circumstances; and exploration of Caravaggio's use of light and shadow can be shown through use of oil painting techniques in Unit 2. |

Co3 have developed an app to help audiences engage with the show. Teachers and students will be able to access behind the scenes information. Head to Co3's website to get the app information.