

Reconciliation and recognition of Australia's First Peoples

Critical Path understands that we collectively as white peoples and white institutions have much to learn from the highly sophisticated systems of Knowledge and Governance of First Nations people. We are trying to place these at the centre of what we do, whilst upholding their intellectual property rights and ownership of their own Knowledges and Governance. Our approach is to be anti-racist and create autonomous self-governing models, led by First Nations peoples.

We currently work in the following 6 modes -

- A Critical Path Acknowledges Country**
- B Critical Path works to ensure that First Nations Australians are an integral part of our governance team and structure**
- C We have made a commitment to work with Indigenous choreographers and other artists across all stages of their careers**
- D Dedicated self-governing programs for, by and with First Nations Australian artists**
- E Encourage and invite participation in labs and other partnership projects**
- F Forums, talks, panels (public and decision making) and writing include Indigenous artists**

How we carry this out -

- A Critical Path Acknowledges Country in the following ways**
 - SPOKEN
 - At the start of board meeting
 - At events and in workshops and other group activities
 - WRITTEN
 - On emails, e-news, e-cards and all print. Next to update template letterhead (digital). Will include in designed version of 2019 Annual Report.
 - ACTIVITY
 - Our 2018 research project explored what it means to Acknowledge Country here at the Drill Hall and in the surrounding area (Woollahra). It invited two artists to consider choreographic approaches to this question. Acknowledging Country through Soft-tone podcast available on Critical Path website.
 - Welcome To Country requested at some recent events. Interchange Festival 2019-20 (digital) includes an online Welcome by Matthew Doyle.
 - Discussion of relationship to Country and Acknowledging Country through Dancing the Drill – Talking Dance conversations, March 2020 – video available on website.
- B Critical Path works to ensure that First Nations Australians are an integral part of our governance team and structure**
 - Artist Representatives must include at least one Indigenous artist at any time
 - We are actively seeking FNA people to join the board in addition to the artist representative.

- The committee have been exploring a RAP process as part of ensuring that we address the issues and needs of First Nation Australian peoples. This has included the appropriateness of a RAP at this time.

C We have made a commitment to work with Indigenous choreographers and other artists across all stages of their careers

Adrienne Simmons, Amrita Hepi, Caleena Sansbury, Carly Sheppard, Eric Avery, Frances Rings, Ghenoa Gela, Henrietta Baird, Taree Sansbury, Thomas E. S. Kelly (and his Karul company members), Jasmin Sheppard, Joel Bray, Jacob Boehme, Joshua Pether, Katie Leslie, Katina Olsen, Kirk Page, Mariaa Randell, Marilyn Miller, Monica Stevens, Rita Pryce, Sinsa Mansell, Tahnee Arnold, Vicki Van Hout.

In addition, we have connected with other artists through ongoing conversations or invitations to participate in talks and forums or through their participation in workshops or attendance at events Amala Groom, Jo Clancy, Matthew Doyle, Timothy Bishop.

We have an ongoing relationship with BlakDance as one of our key strategic working partnerships.

Finally, we consider our wider program of connection and collaboration with other First Nations artists an important part of the ways which address the needs and concerns of Indigenous artists and practice here in Australia.

And the invitation to and inclusion of International First Nations artists is supported by Indigenous artists here -

Bianca Hyslop, Cathy Livemore, Charles Koroneho, Dâkot-ta Alcantara-Camacho, Emily Johnson, Jack Gray, Jahra Wassasala

D Dedicated programs targeting First Nations Australian artists

- Mentoring program for young/emerging artists facilitated by Vicki Van Hout with Thomas E. S. Kelly, Taree Sansbury, Henrietta Baird, Caleena Sansbury, Eric Avery.
- Residency opportunities for emerging and experienced choreographers to work on their own research and creative projects Taree Sansbury, Carly Sheppard, Eric Avery & Vicki Van Hout
- Mirramu partnership residency targeting FNA artists, Year 1 Katina Olsen (and support to work on family Country in Queensland).
- NORPA partnership to support Thomas Kelly to work on his family's Country
- Blakdance partnership to send Carly Sheppard to Dancing Earth lab in New Mexico
- Mirramu partnership residency targeting FNA artists (5 practitioners), Articulating Practice workshop (4 practitioners).

E Encourage and invite participation in labs and other partnership projects

- Joshua Pether and Ghenoa Gela participation in Body As Material – Solo Practice Lab
- Vicki Van Hout in Intercultural Lab
- Taree Sansbury and Thomas E. S. Kelly in Nicola Conibere's Assembly residency
- Artists writing for Critical Dialogues e.g. Joshua Pether for Claiming Space
- Frances Rings and Vicki Van Hout in Dancing Our City archive project
- Interchange Festival 2017 including curation of Friday night Thomas E. S. Kelly with Victoria Hunt.

- Acknowledging Country research project Katina Olsen & Lizzie Thomson (advisors Vicki Van Hout, Tim Bishop & Matthew Doyle)
- Henrietta Baird in the Choreographic Hack Lab 2019
- Jacob Boehme digital residency with Eddie Ladd 2019
- Responsive Research Residencies Kirk Page with Jade Dewi (2019), Yolande Brown (2020)

F **Forums, talks, panels (public and decision making) and writing include Indigenous artists**

- Talking Dance with Sydney Festival
 - 2017 – Frances Rings, Taree Sansbury, Amrita Hepi and Jacob Boehme
 - 2018 – Ghenoa Gela and Jimi Bani
 - 2019 – Henrietta Baird
 Talking Dance 2020 – Dancing the Drill
 - Yolande Brown with Jasmin Sheppard. Matthew Doyle.
- Interchange Festival 2017
 - Mornings Are Difficult 2017 – Tim Bishop
 - Forum conversations 2017 – Amala Groom
 - Curated evenings 2017 – Thomas Kelly, Taree Sansbury, Joshua Pether
 - Workshop 2017 – Monica Stevens
- Participation in artists panels for residencies
 - Vicki Van Hout, Tim Bishop, Monica Stevens, Jacob Boehme, Jo Clancy, Kirk Page
- Writing for publications
 - Joshua Pether (Claiming Space), Henrietta Baird (The Anthropocene), Monica Stevens (digital practice edition) Critical Dialogues, Adrienne Semmens with Jennifer Eadie for Why Dance Matters Now with Delving Into Dance

Addressing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander protocols in 5 areas:

Critical Path's partnerships and relationships with BlakDance and other First Nations dance makers and leaders, enables First Nations leadership and decision making in developing and delivering our programs. That the **voice** of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists is central. The development of a Knowledge Circle will further this.

Our programs are an **investment** in career pathways for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and cultural sector, including traineeship and mentoring.

Through the employment of a Koori Producer as well as our wide program we support **leadership** development for emerging, mid-career and established artists. Our board includes a First Nations Australian artist representative.

This project delivers on a core commitment to put Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and artists at the heart of what we do. We have **respect** and acknowledge Indigenous cultures and communities through the way we communicate, who we engage with and how we work. We aim to provide much needed redress through our partnership with BlakDance, to deliver First Nations dance residencies, curated by the all Indigenous Knowledge Circle, which we aim to be an approach to autonomous decisions making.

This program addresses the articulated need of Indigenous communities to build capacity and skill to take **ownership** of the development of practice. To decolonise practice and the control of that practice.

VOICE

Critical Path's partnership with Elders from the community, BlakDance, senior Indigenous dance makers and leaders demonstrates relationships, accountability and responsibility to the community. Building support for an all Indigenous Knowledge Circle within the program, both as driving that program and as an intrinsic part of the nurturing of independent practitioners, is key to listening to the voice of Indigenous artists and making space for that voice in the wider sector.

INVESTMENT

Investing in career pathways for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and cultural sector provides substantive redress. Traineeships, mentorships, and leadership programs are just some examples. Identifying work opportunities for Aboriginal people in the arts and cultural sector is also a priority area for investment.

Furthermore, the investment in the development of practice and opportunities to nurture their ongoing work is key to the sustainability of independent artists.

LEADERSHIP

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Governance and Leadership is one of the priorities identified nationally in *Closing the Gap*. Critical Path continues to pursue opportunities at Governance level with our Indigenous community including First Nations Australian artist representatives (to date Vicki Van Hout, Thomas E S Kelly, Kirk Page and currently Jasmin Sheppard).

Through the employment of a Koori Producer as well as our wide program we support leadership development for emerging, mid-career and established artists.

RESPECT

CP has a range of ways in which we engage with and acknowledge specific experiences, culture, heritage, lore and law of Indigenous communities and individuals. We have an active program that delivers on a core commitment to put Indigenous culture and artists at the heart of what we do.

OWNERSHIP

We uphold the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples and other rights frameworks. We partner with Elders, community, leaders and BlakDance, to consult with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and we will employ a Koori Producer within the team. The draft program for 2020-22, drawn up in consultation with the sector and BlakDance will also be shaped around the understanding and experiences of the Producer, the explorations and directives of the Knowledge Circle and the needs and desires of the First Nations artists proposing residencies. The need to decolonise spaces, practice and structures is a recommendation of the National Indigenous Dance Forum 2017.