

Press Release

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Chunky Move Media Centre

## CHUNKY MOVE ANNOUNCES JOEL BRAY AS INAUGURAL CHOREOGRAPHER IN RESIDENCE



**Set to commence in 2021, Joel will undertake an \$80,000 two-year residency with Victoria's leading dance company, an initiative in partnership with the Tanja Liedtke Foundation.**

The introduction of this major new initiative extends Chunky Move's commitment to supporting established independent choreographers to develop their careers while furthering the company's ambition to transform how contemporary dance is experienced, valued and understood.

The residency is designed to provide Australian choreographic artists with extensive support to develop and present new work, further their artistic practice, gain organisational knowledge, extend their professional networks and build a meaningful ongoing connection with Chunky Move.

"It was dancing with Chunky Move which brought me back to Australia. So I am so thrilled to be coming onboard as choreographer-in-residence; it feels like coming home" said Joel Bray. "I received the news whilst walking through the city and did a little spontaneous dance on the footpath, because this incredible opportunity is such a vote of faith in me and my practice, and a genuine investment in Blackfella work of scale. My heartfelt thanks to both Chunky Move and the Tanja Liedtke Foundation. I can't wait to get cracking next year!"

Antony Hamilton and Kristy Ayre co-CEO's of Chunky Move said, "We are thrilled to announce the appointment of Joel Bray as our inaugural Choreographer In Residence for 2021-22. Through the selection process, the panel were blown away by Joel's enthusiasm for the opportunity and his clear ability to identify how he will work with the company at this critical moment in his career. Joel's connection to Chunky Move has been significant, having previously been a performer and commissioned artist and we are excited to have his thoughtful, vibrant and creative presence contributing to the artistic program of the company over the next two years".

The Tanja Liedtke Foundation said of the inaugural initiative: "We are fully dedicated to fostering the artistic development of young Australian choreographers and are thankful to be part of this extraordinary program with Chunky Move."

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## NOTES TO THE EDITOR

- Chunky Move is Victoria's flagship contemporary dance company, celebrating their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year
- The celebratory digital media archive can be found at [cmarchive.net](http://cmarchive.net)
- All images can be found at the Chunky Move Media Centre
- Further information can be found at [chunkymove.com](http://chunkymove.com)

## JOEL BRAY BIOGRAPHY

Joel Bray is a proud Wiradjuri man who trained at NAISDA and WAAPA before pursuing a career in Europe and Israel with Jean-Claude Gallotta, Company CeDeCe, Kolben Dance, Machol Shalem Dance House, Yoram Karmi's FRESCO Dance Company, Niv Sheinfeld & Oren Laor and Roy Assaf. He returned to Australia to work with Chunky Move under Anouk van Dijk.

Joel's choreographic practice springs from his Wiradjuri cultural heritage. His works are intimate encounters in unorthodox spaces, in which audience-members are invited in as co-storytellers to explore the experiences of fair-skinned Aboriginal people, and the experiences of contemporary gay men in an increasingly digital and isolated world. His body becomes the intersection site of those songlines – Indigenous heritage, skin-colour and queer sexuality.

Since returning to Melbourne, Joel has created numerous critically acclaimed solo works, including *Biladurang* (winner of three Melbourne Fringe Awards); *Dharawungara*, (commissioned by Chunky Move) and *Daddy* (commissioned by the Yirramboi Festival, Arts House and Liveworks). Joel's works have toured extensively across Australia.

Joel was the 2019 National Library of Australia Creative Arts Fellow, and is continuing this Burbang research into Wiradjuri ceremony through a series of Australia Council Signature Works grants. In 2020, he was commissioned to create a new work as part of Sydney Dance Company's *New Breed*.

[www.joelbraydance.com](http://www.joelbraydance.com)