

Media release

Dancers bring pioneering theatre to life in Preston

Dancers from Fever Dance Lancashire are set to become the stars of the show when the pioneering immersive theatre company [Bodies in Flight](#) bring their latest production, [Life Class](#), to Preston this Friday 24 September at 7.30pm.

The show, part of the [Lancashire Encounter Festival](#) (running 17 September - 2 October), will see performers reliving the romantic encounters they enjoyed at the social dances of their youth, and recalling how those encounters transformed their lives.

Bodies in Flight has stirred the souls of audiences all over the world over the past 30 years through unique and memorable performances which have asked profound questions about the human condition. As each show unfolds, audiences are challenged to confront their deepest desires and fears, provoking deep introspection as they reflect on the courses their lives have taken and what might lie ahead.

Over the last three decades, their immersive theatre productions have frequently torn down the conventional divide between performer, audience and place, delivering an intoxicating alchemy of live art, performance and choreography "where flesh utters and words move."

***Life Class* comes to Preston**

In recent times, *Bodies in Flight* has delivered collaborative and bespoke performances which have put individuals from communities all over the world centre stage in unique and unusual environments - from seaside towns to cities, galleries and even gyms. This weekend's performance of *Life Class* will transform dancers from Preston into the stars of the show.

Life Class was first performed in 2019 and arrives in Preston on Friday 24 September as part of the Lancashire Encounter Festival. It will be the first staging of the show since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. It will feature individuals from the [Fever Dance Company](#) in Preston alongside the Preston People's Choir.

The show explores how encounters between two people at a community dance hall can change the course of their lives forever. Early performances saw choreographer Sara

Giddens, Reader in Choreographic Practices at the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan), working closely with the dancers who belong to community social dance groups. The participants actively contributed to shaping the material, sharing their recollections of romantic encounters in the dance halls of their youth. Each show culminates in a dance led by the local movers, breaking down the divide between participants and spectators.

Sara says: "*Life Class* is a monument to our three decades in the limelight, encompassing performances which have variously challenged the traditional boundaries of live theatre, made searing political statements, and frequently transformed members of the public into the stars of the show. By working closely with communities from all over the world and staging events in unique and unusual environments, no two shows are ever the same. We can't wait to bring the world of *Bodies in Flight* to Preston on Friday 24 September as part of the Lancashire Encounter Festival."

Life Class will take place this Friday 24 September from 7.30pm at Fever Dance Company, Mornington Road, Preston PR1 4UL. Tickets are free but places are limited. To reserve your ticket contact sbarrowdance@outlook.com.

(Note: the show was originally scheduled to be performed at Preston's Flag Market on Saturday 25 September, but the venue/time have changed due to technical issues.)

(Ends)

Notes to editor

Images credit

Tony Judge

More information

- For free tickets and further information contact Sophie-Leigh Barrow: sbarrowdance@uclan.ac.uk
- *Bodies in Flight* theatre company: <https://www.bodiesinflight.co.uk/>
- About the Life Class show: <https://www.bodiesinflight.co.uk/events/event-title/>
- Life Class trailer (video): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rUQIAidXWrg>
- Fever Dance Company, Preston: <https://www.feverdancecompany.com/>
- Lancashire Encounter Festival: <https://www.lancsencounter.co.uk/>

About *Bodies in Flight*: 30 years of immersive theatre

Over the last three decades the Bristol and Nottingham-based Bodies in Flight theatre company have staged performances which frequently tore down the conventional divide between performer, audience and place, delivering an intoxicating alchemy of live art, performance and choreography “where flesh utters and words move.”

Performances see on-stage actors interact and intertwine with technology, soundscapes and visual media, while the environment surrounding the stage is often every bit as integral to the show as any individual. The creative team take delight in taking advantage of the live arena’s unique ability to juxtapose the physical (“flesh”) with narrative (“text”).

The *Bodies in Flight* theatre company is co-directed by the writer Professor Simon Jones and choreographer Dr Sara Giddens, who is also Reader in Choreographic Practice on the BA (Hons) Dance Performance and Teaching course at the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan).

The company’s earliest performances were infused with a heady concoction of satire, experimentation and anarchic energy. Debut *DeadPlay* (1989-90) began with performers acting out children’s games – namely the act of ‘playing dead’ and coming back to life – to the soundtrack of Wagner’s *Parsifal*, gleefully poking fun at the pomposity of live opera. In more recent times, *Bodies in Flight* has delivered collaborative and bespoke performances which have put individuals from communities all over the world centre stage in unique and unusual environments – from seaside towns to cities, galleries and even gyms.

Dream-Work/Dream Walk (2009-16) took on different incarnations wherever it was performed (from Singapore to Skegness). It explored the disconnect between how an individual constructs their sense of ‘self’ inside their own head, and how this version can contrast markedly with the personality they project to the outside world. The shows explored these scenarios through the lens of a person’s daily commute to work, examining the overlaying of the public and private realms and how this influences human behaviour. Initially the performers would mingle unnoticed amongst everyday commuters before emerging from the bustling crowd to deliver song and dance routines.

Gymnast (2012) took inspiration from the fervour surrounding the London 2012 Olympic Games, focusing on the singular drive and determination of elite athletes in their pursuit of peak physical fitness and the perfect performance. The multimedia production

combined video installations with live action involving real gymnasts and a choir. It celebrated the Olympian desire to reach the upper limits of human achievement and the audiences who watch on in awe of their almost superhuman prowess. In the run-up to the Olympic Games, the BBC broadcast four of the videos on big screens set up in 22 locations across the UK, bringing the work of *Bodies in Flight* to an audience of millions.

Contact

For free tickets and further information contact Sophie-Leigh Barrow:

sbarrowdance@uclan.ac.uk