

MONICA MUÑOZ DANCE



UP-CLOSE

UP-CLOSE is a **DANCE INVASION** for your school

UP-CLOSE by Monica Muñoz is a dance performance, discussion, and workshop all in one. It has been specially developed to bring dance to schools in an accessible way and to stimulate an appetite for dance. The **hour-long program** takes place at your school.

UP-CLOSE is a **DANCE EXPERIENCE** that leaves you wanting more

At the heart of this programme is **UP-CLOSE**: An energetic dance piece where two strangers meet, connect, and celebrate their new friendship. Together they look to the future with hope, optimism, and an appetite for life. **UP-CLOSE** is about trusting each other, building resilience together and letting go of the past. Designed for two dancers and a car tyre, blending contemporary, street dance styles with circus skills, peppered with good humour and raw energy **UP-CLOSE** appeals to the liveness of children and ignites our yearning for physical contact. (25 mins)

- ➔ The performance is followed by a conversation to capture what the audiences have seen and an opportunity to ask questions. (15 mins)
- ➔ Finally, with ease of transition the creative team facilitate a movement workshop and almost without realising it, children can explore ideas from the show and experience the piece physically. (15 mins)

[>>>WATCH THE SHOW TRAILER HERE<<](#)

MONICA MUÑOZ – THE CHOREOGRAPHER

Monica Muñoz is a dancer, performance-maker, and educator originally from Barcelona and based in Dublin since 2014. She is interested in making exciting new performances for early years and young audiences. Recent productions include *Fall & Float*, Irish Spring Tour; *UP-CLOSE*, commissioned and presented at Tipperary Dance International Festival, Ireland (2021). Previous work includes the acclaimed *Princesses Can Be Pirates*, funded by Business to Arts that toured Nationally and Internationally with support from The Irish Arts Council and Culture Ireland.

She is currently The Ark's John Coolahan *Early Years Artist in Residence 2021/22* and a recent *GROW Pathways to Production Participant*, an initiative from Baboró International Children's Festival in partnership with Druid, the Mick Lally Theatre, Branar Téatar do Phaistí, The Irish Theatre Institute (ITI) and Galway Theatre Festival.



"I started going to dance classes because I was always moving: in the classroom, at home, with my friends so my mother thought it would help me to have a place where I can do it"

- Monica

CRISTIAN ENMANUEL DÍRODIE – DANCER

"I started to dance with friends from my neighbourhood... We spent hours and hours dancing in the park... and I loved it."

Cristian is a professional dance and music artist from the Dominican Republic lauded by the critics for "the flowing, electrical intensity" of his performances. He specialises in the Street Dance styles – Breakdance, Krump and HipHop and has won many national and international competitions including SOAR UK – HipHop Masters (2017) and Rep Your Style (2018). He has been based in Ireland since 2014 working as a freelance dancer, musician, dance teacher and choreographer. Recent credits include *Blame Game*, Cork Midsummer Festival 2019, *Origins*, *The Eternal*, D2C Lab Dance Ireland, and the recent collaboration with Liz Roche Dance Company as part of the 2019 LIR Academy Lighting Mentorship. He also participated in the mentorship programme with Canadian Dance Company, Tentacle Tribe. He made his CoisCéim debut in David Bolger's *FRANCIS FOOTWORK* in 2019



MATT SZCZEREK – DANCER



"I started dancing because my parents loved it and were taking me to dance parties. I saw them enjoying it and immediately fell in love with it myself."

Later, I witnessed a group of B-Boys training and that was it! I knew I want to learn how to defy gravity:)"

From 2014-2018 he has danced regularly with CoisCéim Dance Theatre, performing as a principal dancer in *THE WOLF AND PETER* (2017 Sydney Opera House), and in *RTE'S 1916 CENTENARY* performance at Bord Gáis Energy Theatre, choreographed by David Bolger. His own choreographic work *EMERSION* (2016) was performed as part of *OIL&WATER* (2016), a collaboration with Cathy Coughlan (HAVOC), supported by The Arts Council and South Dublin County Council. Matt was selected by Far From The Norm Dance Company in 2017 to be part of an international cast for production *UNION BLACK*, funded by Creative Europe, which toured to the UK, France, Sweden and Ireland. In 2018 he presented *FABLE* at Dublin Fringe Festival at Project Arts Centre. The work was nominated for a Best Ensemble Award. From 2018 until 2021 he directed/curated Dance2Connect, an annual event, 3-day Urban Dance Festival at The Civic Theatre.

>> TALK ABOUT DANCE <<

To start talking about the dance experience, let's assume the following:

It's not about asking for knowledge or "having understood". It's about the experience, collecting impressions, opinions, and different perceptions.

- There is no right or wrong. Allow free interpretation and allow not having to come to a consensus.
- Answers are not corrected, but put up for discussion: "What do the others think about this?"
- The benefit of the conversation arises from the variety of perspectives. We don't have to agree!
- Some questions remain open and unanswered - and that's okay because it encourages us to think about it further.

QUESTIONS

- Give 3 words associations for what you have seen
- What was your personal highlight of the piece?
- How did you feel while watching?
- Was there a moment in the piece that you found difficult or caused irritation? What was it?
- What did the car tyre represent for you?
- What do you think happened in the scene in which the dancers start moving the car tyre?
- What happens at the end of the piece?
- Was there a moment when you felt like dancing along? Where was that?
- Do you know how the movements come from, who made them?
- The two performers finish the piece going into an adventure!

>> DANCE ACTIVITY – FOR YOU! <<

Adventure is... What is adventure for you?

- Divide into small groups of four.
- Everyone makes a gesture with hands, arms, legs, feet, head and body that shows an adventure for them.
- Add all the gestures together, one by one in your group to make a longer movement sequence – think of the idea "*I'm packing my suitcase*".
- Decide together which movements you want to do slowly and which quickly.
- Repeats this movement sequence, or what we call, the choreography in an endless loop.
- Every now and then each of you gets stuck like an old record player with a movement and repeats it 2, 3 or even 8 times as often as you like. That means you do a little solo and then get back into the choreography with the others.
- Choose some music and show each other your short choreographies. Each dance performance is rewarded and acknowledged with applause.



THE IDEA?? WHERE DID THE IDEA FOR THIS DANCE COME FROM?

REHEARSAL PROCESS

In contemporary dance there is no finished piece before rehearsals begin. The choreographer works with the cast to realise their ideas. At the first rehearsal, Monica met with the dancers and the composer and presented her idea for the piece. Over a few weeks, they worked together in a dance studio developing the scenes, storyline and of course the dance movements. Gradually, the piece you see today, UP-CLOSE emerged, which the dancers repeat repeatedly to learn by heart. The rehearsals are often recorded on video, which, in addition to memory, replaces the textbook, so to speak, and helps the dancers and the composer in the learning process. Body memory helps here: the dancers repeat the steps so often that they no longer must actively think about it, but the body knows what to do out of a routine.

In the dance piece UP-CLOSE, the choreographer Monica Munoz didn't specify any movements. Most of the movements, also called movement material, were suggested by the dancers, and then further developed together with Monica using **Choreography and composition tools**. What that means is, the movements were *shortened*, or the *speed changed*. Solo dances became duets and the dancers interacted with the tyre. Monica would set **tasks** for the dancers.

For example, "*Find a movement that you associate with being lonely.*" This resulted in a variety of movements, sometimes with illustrative and sometimes with abstract translations.

CONTEMPORARY DANCE

Dance is often described as the most primal of all arts. It is a human expression of life that has always existed and in all cultures. People are born with a pronounced urge to move and the need to express their inner world in a creative way. In many cultures, dance is an integral part of life and so there is a lot of extensive dancing at festivals and social events.

Ballet developed in the 15th and 16th centuries from plays performed at Italian and French royal courts and from parlor dance games. In ballet, the movements are strictly defined and must be performed in a very specific way. This is exactly what some dancers resisted at the beginning of the 20th century. Dancing in pointe shoes and corsets seemed unnatural to them and they found the movement repertoire of ballet too small. Their demand: Freedom! They wanted to dance on stage as they pleased. This began the upheaval and renewal of dance in Europe: Solo dancers in Germany, France and Great Britain suddenly performed barefoot and danced completely new sequences of steps. They also decided for themselves what they wanted to show on stage. Movements never shown before conquered the dance world. Hitting, stomping, pushing - suddenly everything was possible. This new way of dancing was strongly tied to the personality of the dancers and choreographers. From now on, the whole body was used to express experiences and feelings such as anger, sadness, tension or joy. Unlike in ballet, where the movements are rather light and floating, movements could now also be powerful and difficult. At the end of the 1960s, the so-called "dance theater" emerged in Germany. A lot is allowed under this term, the dancers speak, sing, make music, use props, or wear everyday clothes on stage.

The relatively young term "contemporary dance" is increasingly replacing the terms "modern dance" or "dance theater". Contemporary dance is fed by a variety of dance and movement techniques as well as aesthetic forms. Different dance styles (such as ballet, hip hop, modern dance, krumping, popping, locking, breakdance, jazz, etc.), speech, singing, live music and video projections are all integrated into the dance piece.

>> UP-CLOSE CREDITS <<

THE PEOPLE WHO MADE THIS SHOW HAPPEN!

Choreography by Monica Muñoz in collaboration with the dancers

Dancers: Cristian Emmanuel Dirocie and Matheus Szczerek and Jack Bain in the original cast.

Sound Design: Sinead Diskin

Technician: Paul Lenihan

Dramaturgical Support: Claire Mullane

Engagement Producer: Sophie Coote

Photography: Alexandre Iseli

Producer: Michelle Cahill



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