

ADELAIDE
FESTIVAL **AF**

Akram Khan's Jungle Book reimagined



Resource developed by Rebecca Hassam 2024

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Youth & Education Program Partners



**“We all inhabit it,
we all take from it,
and we all build on
it, but we have
forgotten to return
our respect for it.”**
– Akram Khan



Suitable Year Levels

Year 7 – Year 12

Genre

Physical Theatre/Dance

Warnings

- Depictions of violence
- Theatrical smoke
- Sound pressure effects (loud noises)
- Gun shot sounds

Synopsis

The water is rising. Cities are abandoned. People must leave everything behind in search for dry land. It's an ecological disaster and the message is clear: humans are to blame.

Climate catastrophe is the backdrop for Akram Khan's cautionary reimagining of Rudyard Kipling's *Jungle Book*. Mowgli is

a refugee girl who we first meet drifting on a shipping container in high waters due to global warming. When she slips from her makeshift raft, she falls into an abyss, a sea full of garbage. She washes up in a ravished place that could be anywhere in the world, ruled by gangs of animals who live among the detritus of the abandoned city. The animals, escaped from zoos, circuses, and testing labs, suffer

from PTSD from their past in the human world.

The animals' wariness of Mowgli is driven by what other humans have done to the Earth and its natural life. A strong condemnation of the negative effects humankind has had on the planet over centuries runs deeply throughout the work, in the animals' voices and the projections.



Background Information

Akram Khan is one of the most celebrated and respected dance artists of today. In just over 23 years he has created a body of work that has contributed significantly to the arts in the UK and abroad. His reputation has been built on the success of imaginative, highly accessible and relevant productions such as *Outwitting the Devil*, *XENOS*, *Until the Lions*, *Kaash*, *iTMOi (in the mind of Igor)*, *DESH*, *Vertical Road*, *Gnosis* and *zero degrees*.

Khan's work is recognised as being profoundly moving, in which his intelligently crafted storytelling is effortlessly intimate and epic. Described by the *Financial Times* as an artist "who speaks tremendously of tremendous things", a highlight of his career was the creation of a section of the London 2012

Olympic Games Opening Ceremony that was received with unanimous acclaim.

As a choreographer, Khan has developed a close collaboration with English National Ballet and its Artistic Director Tamara Rojo. He created the short piece *Dust*, part of the *Lest We Forget* programme, which led to an invitation to create his own critically acclaimed version of the iconic romantic ballet *Giselle*.

In recent years, Khan has moved into television, specifically documentaries. He has created three documentaries with Swan Films for Channel 4, the Sky Arts documentary series *Why Do We Dance*, and an episode of the Netflix series *MOVE*.

Khan has been the recipient of numerous awards throughout his

career including the Laurence Olivier Award, the Bessie Award (New York Dance and Performance Award), the prestigious ISPA (International Society for the Performing Arts) Distinguished Artist Award, the Fred and Adele Astaire Award, the Herald Archangel Award at the Edinburgh International Festival, the South Bank Sky Arts Award and eight Critics' Circle National Dance Awards. Khan was awarded an MBE for services to dance in 2005. He has recently been announced as the new Chancellor of De Montfort University, and he is also an Honorary Graduate of University of London as well as Roehampton and De Montfort Universities, and an Honorary Fellow of Trinity Laban.

Themes & Ideas

Post -apocalyptic world

In Akram Khan's *Jungle Book reimaged*, mankind poses a deep threat towards nature. The planet is becoming inhabitable for both the humans who are to blame for this catastrophe and for the animals who have become victims to this devastating circumstance. The animals have congregated and formed an uneasy alliance as they try to live with this new unreliable climate.

Climate catastrophe

This performance is Akram Khan's cry of alarm at both man-made climate change and man's cruelty to other living things. The performance has been reinterpreted with a sense of urgency and through the lens of the children of today who will inherit our world and become our future storytellers. The message is clear, that we are guests on this land and must look after it, respecting animals and nature.

Belonging

Mowgli is forced to leave her homeland because it isn't safe for her to live there anymore. It was a place where she felt like she belonged. Having lost her family, she looks to the animals around her as her new family. However, the animals are unsure whether she belongs with them because she is

"We think we own the Earth, but Earth was here way before us and it's going to be here way after us. The question is, do we want to fight it, and allow it to, let's say, cut the cancer out – which is us. Or will we somehow start to surrender to it and and a new way of living which is more conscious of the voice of the Earth?" – Akram Khan

human and may not be trustworthy. Mowgli is frightened and unsure and is searching to find a way for deep communication with her new surroundings. Mowgli is a climate refugee who has been displaced from her homeland.

Respecting nature

The *Jungle Book reimaged* is a morally-oriented work that seeks to educate our civilisation on how we inhabit our planet. The performance questions our relationship to nature and what we are doing to preserve it and delivers a positive message about garnering a mutual respect between humans and nature. The idea of listening is embedded in Khans' *Jungle Book*, his protagonist, Mowgli is in tune with nature and able to communicate with the animals and demonstrates mutual respect with her natural surroundings.



Production



Music

Jocelyn Pook's score jumps from soothing mournful music to militaristic drumming to underscore the narrative elements and the emotional journey of the characters. Tariq Jordan's script is delivered via a voiceover to free up the dancers to embody their animal characterisations. The songs and spoken elements of the show make it feel like a hybrid between a dance production and a theatre production. The vocal tracks are pre-recorded, therefore the timing of the dancers must be perfect.

Set Design

Miriam Buether has created a minimalist set design that comprises of piles of discarded recycled cardboard boxes made locally from sustainably managed Australian forests. They are placed on either side of the stage which are used to create animals in the urban jungle. The cardboard boxes are more than just clever set pieces, they are also the company's solution to touring sustainably. At the end of the production, they will be recycled again. The boxes create the dissected snake body of the hypnotising Kaa as she fluidly wriggles, the boxes are held up by the dancers to simulate her serpentine movements. In the climax, a rippling white silk sheet imitating water floods the stage in an impressive spectacle. Multiple layers of projection screens are used for the animation of stylised animals that come alive on the stage and interact with the dancers. Adam Smith's beautiful line-drawing animations are projected on a scrim at the front of the stage. Rain lashes down, whales rear up, kites fly, monkey's hold court and giant elephants lope on. The animation, by YeastCulture, is exquisitely drawn and enhances, rather than competes with, the action on stage.



Dramatic Structure

Jungle Book reimagined recalls Rudyard Kipling's original story and is steeped in different narratives that interweave through and around each other. Taking inspiration from traditional Indian myths, the performance is linear in its storytelling and uses voiced narrative, music, projections, and movement to progress the narrative.

Dramatic Form/Convention

Jungle Book reimagined is a physical theatre/dance performance piece that encompasses voiceover, animation projection and animal characterisations. It powerfully blends dance theatre with digital elements, including state-of-the-art animation and a specially commissioned score, to create Mowgli's magical world and bring this story to life. The live performers interact with their surroundings to create a post-apocalyptic urban jungle landscape.

"Through the meeting of worlds, we invite people to see, dream and reflect on the beauty and complexity of being human."

– Akram Khan

The storyline is divided into two Acts. In Act 1 the child is discovered by a wolf pack and after much deliberation is accepted by the animal council and given the name Mowgli. She has two companions, Bagheera, a kidnapped albino panther who grew up in a palace, and Baloo, an escaped dancing bear. While searching for food, Mowgli is kidnapped by the Bandar-log, lab monkeys. In Act 2, the Bandar-log look to Mowgli to teach them how to become fully human. With the help of Kaa, a rock python, Bagheera and Baloo rescue Mowgli. Peace doesn't last and Mowgli makes a decision to stand up and fight for her new found friends to end the savagery of the hunter.

Characterisation

The dancers embody the characteristics of animals to represent bears, monkeys, and panthers. The dancing is mesmerising, full of grace and athleticism. The humour integrated into the choreography makes it appealing to younger audiences. The ensemble sections include the ten dancers in a tight grouping that moves between wide legged stances to crouching walking, upper bodies writhing. **Kathak's** techniques are driven by drumbeats adding nimble feet and ultra expressive undulating arms and hands. The performers inhabit their animals with incredible detail to movement and intonation of their character's speech.

Kathak

Derived from North India, it is one of 8 classical dance forms. It originated within Hindu temples as a storytelling device for portraying the epic tals from Hindu scriptures, Mahabharata and Ramyana

Curriculum Links

This education resource has been developed with links to the Australian Curriculum. Activities have been created to reflect each of the achievement standards, depending on the year level, including content descriptions within each learning area and the general capabilities. The resource aims to provide teachers with information to help prepare students before attending the performance, as well as structured learning activities for the classroom after viewing the performance.

General Capabilities

The Arts Learning Area has a natural link to the elements of the General Capabilities. Specific learning activities have been linked with the following icons:



Literacy



Critical and Creative Thinking



Ethical Understanding



Personal and social capability



Intercultural understanding

Cross Curriculum Capabilities



Sustainability

Drama

Years 7 and 8 Drama

Analyse how the elements of drama have been combined in devised and scripted drama to convey different forms, performance styles and dramatic meaning.

Years 9 and 10 Drama

Evaluate how the elements of drama, forms and performance styles in devised and scripted drama convey meaning and aesthetic effect.

Stage 1 Drama

Understanding and Exploration

UE1 Understanding and exploration of dramatic roles conventions and processes.

UE2 Understanding and exploration of dramatic ideas, texts, styles and/or conventions.

Critical and Creative Thinking

CCT2 Analysis and evaluation of dramatic ideas, products and technologies.

Stage 2 Drama

Knowledge and Understanding

KU1 Exploration and understanding of dramatic theories, texts, styles, conventions, roles and processes.

KU2 Understanding and evaluation of the artistic and cultural value of local, global, contemporary and or historical drama.

Critical and Creative Thinking

CCT2 Analysis and evaluation of the student's own drama making and others' dramatic works, styles and/or events.

MYP The Arts

Criterion D Responding

Strand 1: Construct meaning and transfer learning to new settings.

Strand 2: Create an artistic response which intends to reflect or impact on the world around them.

Strand 3: critique the artwork of self and others.

IB Theatre

Theatre Journal: Students own record of two years of study of their responses to live theatre productions as a spectator.

World Theatre Traditions - Research Presentation: Development of understanding of a theatre tradition in kathak dance.

Dance

Years 7 and 8 Dance

Analyse how choreographers use elements of dance and production elements to communicate intent.

Years 9 and 10 Dance

Evaluate their own choreography and performance and that of others to inform and refine future work.

Stage 1 Dance

Understanding and Exploration

UD2: Knowledge and understanding of appropriate language and terminology relevant to the dance context.

RD2: Investigation into different cultures, historical periods, or dance traditions

Critical and Creative Thinking

CCT2 Applying their understanding of dance to deconstruct, analyse, and discuss.

Stage 2 Dance

Knowledge and Understanding

UD1: Knowledge and understanding of appropriate language and terminology relevant to the dance context.

RD1: Critique and evaluation of a dance presentation, performance, or choreographic piece.

RD2: Analysis and synthesis of research findings to choreograph a dance work.

MYP The Arts

Criterion D Responding

Strand 1: Construct meaning and transfer learning to new settings.

Strand 2: Create an artistic response which intends to reflect or impact on the world around them.

Strand 3: Critique the artwork of self and others.

IB Dance

World Dance Studies: Dance Investigation – for the historical context and the elements in the dance, the similarities and differences between two dance cultures and/or traditions.



Performance Literacy

As students engage with and view live theatre, they develop a deeper understanding of the language of performance art. They develop literacies allowing them to 'read' the gestures and movements of a performer, and an understanding of the intention of the set, costume, lighting design and reflect on how they contribute to the narrative. Students consider the intended meaning of the choreographers, playwrights, directors and/or artists' in choosing a setting, character, or artistic form as well as what they are looking to communicate through their work.

Attending live theatre and responding to performances, addresses the criteria for Literacy in line with the Australian Curriculum General Capabilities

...students become literate as they develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to interpret and use language confidently for learning and communicating in and out of school and for participating effectively in society. Literacy involves students listening to, reading, viewing, speaking, writing, and creating oral, print, visual and digital texts, and using and modifying language for different purposes in a range of contexts.

Art is a means of expressing emotion, a way of transmitting feelings, culture, beliefs and values between the creators and performers of the work and the audience or viewers. Some art is created for the explicit purpose of eliciting a strong emotional response from the audience and there is a myriad of emotions that students will experience when they are viewing live performance from happiness to anger, surprise, annoyance, and confusion, just to name a few.

The **Before the Show** activities are designed to support students to develop these literacy skills, knowledge and understanding in relation to their Adelaide Festival experience.

The **After the Show** activities are designed to provide students with the opportunity to discuss, analyse and comprehend their responses to the show. Having a strong knowledge and understanding of theatre terminology will support students and extend their vocabulary as they describe their theatre experience with authentic language.



Theatre Etiquette

The French word *etiquette*, meaning 'requirements for proper behaviour', was adopted by English speakers in the middle of the 18th century. This can sound a bit formal but understanding theatre etiquette helps an audience understand what to expect and how to get the most out of their theatre experience.

Depending on the age of an audience the expectations can vary. Theatre designed for very young audiences will have different expectations and will often invite and encourage participation. However, as the content becomes more complex and audiences mature, there is an expectation that students will have developed an understanding of the difference between enthusiastic participation and thoughtless disruption.

Group discussion: Why does it matter?

Students to talk about the theatre being a shared space and respecting other audience members attending the performance.

- Discuss the shared role of audience and performer, each is dependent on the other to ensure a great performance.
- Remind students that just as they can see the performers, the performers can see them!
- As a class exercise, compile a list of all the roles and tasks it

takes to bring a live performance to the stage.

- What experiences have they had when their engagement with the performance was compromised by others in the audience?
- What is the role of the audience? What responsibility do they have to the performers on stage?

Theatre protocols to share with students

When in the foyer they should:

- Go to the toilet before going into the theatre.
- Follow the directions of the front of house staff.
- Turn off mobile phones.
- Wear a mask if required.

When the lights go down:

- This is a sign the performance is about to start. It is time to end chats and be quiet.
- Cover coughs and sneezes.
- No eating in the theatre. Only water bottles are allowed.

For senior students writing the review in the darkened auditorium can be disturbing for the performers, particularly if using a mobile phone as a torch. Plus, all the performers can see is the top of the student's head. *Why would this be disturbing for the performers?*

Photographing and filming is not permitted because:

- It can disturb the actors on the stage and break their concentration.
- Intellectual property is paramount. The production on stage is the intellectual property of the theatre company therefore no photographs or filming is allowed.
- You will be missing the detail

you cannot see through the viewfinder

Five broad groups of children whose responses as audience are characterised as:

- **Technicians** – children who are more interested in the technology than the performance, deconstructing the performance techniques employed in the show.
- **Narrators** – children who talk through the performance, asking questions, commenting on actions.
- **Dramatists** – children who immediately imitate what they see, participating through their own actions.
- **Mystics** – children who are completely engrossed in the sensory aspects of the experience.
- **Spectators** – children who hover around the edges, playing with whatever they can find, apparently not engaged, but often able afterwards to recall what they saw.

Ask your students which group they think they would be. Does their response match your observation?

Suggested Tasks

Activity: Questions to put to your students

Exploring the themes in the performance:

Belonging

What groups do you belong to?

- Think of three different groups you belong to? E.g. their class at school, their family, their extended family, a team they support, a group of people that share their same hobby. What makes us belong to these different groups?
- Have you ever had an experience where you felt like you did not belong? E.g. starting a new school or job, being left out by friends. How did it make you feel to not belong to a group?
- Can you have family that you choose as well as family that you are born into? Does anyone have people that they are not related to that feel just as close to?

Migration

- Why do you think people around the world have to leave their homes? What reasons might there be? Do you know where and why people are leaving their homes right now?
- How might it feel to leave your house, friends and family behind?

Connecting to nature

- How does being in nature make you feel? What do you notice happens to your body and your mind?
- What does it mean to live in balance with nature?
- Have humans forgotten how to respect nature? What examples can you think of?

Ideas sourced from
Emma Bellerby,
Creative Learning Manager,
Akram Khan Company



Ethical Understanding

Personal and social capability

Related Content Descriptions

Years 7 and 8 Drama

- Analyse how the elements of drama have been combined in devised and scripted drama to convey different forms, performance styles and dramatic meaning.

Years 9 and 10 Drama

- Evaluate how the elements of drama, forms and performance styles in devised and scripted drama convey meaning and aesthetic effect.

MYP The Arts

Criterion D Responding

Strand i: Construct meaning and transfer learning to new settings.

Strand ii: Create an artistic response which intends to reflect or impact on the world around them.

Year 7 and 8 Dance

- Analyse how choreographers use elements of dance and production elements to communicate intent.

Year 9 and 10 Dance

- Evaluate their own choreography and performance and that of others to inform and refine future work.

Activity:

A letter, a monologue, a poem or story to tomorrow

Jungle Book reimaged is a letter to the future, a cautionary tale of the world we could pass on to future generations if we don't change the way humans live alongside nature. Watch this inspirational video on the ideas behind the concepts in the production:

[youtube.com/watch?v=8wmKfK1NZXU&t=4s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8wmKfK1NZXU&t=4s)

Task: Students to write a letter/monologue/poem or story to the future, thinking about what matters to them about our natural world and what hopes are for the future inhabitants. They might consider the following:

- Tone – i.e. *hope for its future inhabitants?*
- Audience – i.e. *deeply personal to a specific person or place?*
- Emotional connection – i.e. *what matters to you about our natural world?*

Example structure to inspire your letter/monologue/poem or story

Dear...

Who is this letter for? Your future self? Your future family? Your future homeland or a favourite place in nature? The future planet?

- Introduce yourself, tell us something about you.
- Tell us about something you love about the natural world (a place, a feeling, an experience, a memory).

What do you want to say? What are your hopes? What are your fears? What could we lose? What could we gain? What do you care about? What are your promises?



Literacy

Critical and Creative Thinking

Ethical Understanding

Activity: The speaking body

In *Jungle Book reimaged*, the dancers move to the sound of the script, following the rhythm and tone of their character's voice as if it were music.

The dancers' bodies really inhabit the animal they are portraying, and we can see them 'speaking' with their movements to tell the story. Watch this inspirational video on how movement and the story are connected.

[youtube.com/watch?v=4vioL9IH4-4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4vioL9IH4-4)

Task: Students to create their own body syncing dance using one of the speeches from climate activist Greta Thunberg. Choose 2-3 sentences from her speech and look to embody her emotional engagement through your own body movements. They might consider the following:

- Identify a moment in the speech that inspires you to move a certain way?
- What's the rhythm of the speech?
- Explore the tone of the speech?
- Is there a moment of silence to explore?



Literacy

Critical and Creative Thinking

Activity: Moving drawings

In *Jungle Book reimagined*, animation is used to transport the audience into the world of the characters and immerse us in the telling of the story. Many of the animations used in the show have an elemental theme, incorporating water, fire, earth and air to connect the audience to the natural world. Watch this video explaining the connection to animation and the live performance: [youtube.com/watch?v=lcbw6e-aiAw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lcbw6e-aiAw)



Information and communication technology

Task: Create your own animation in a flipbook to bring a simple drawing to life.

You will need:

- A stack of paper or card. Small sizes like index cards or flashcards work best.
- A bulldog clip or elastic band to secure the paper together.
- A pen or pencil. You might find that it is easier to use something that creates a bold line, like a marker.
- A light source that you can put the paper over the top of so that you can see through it.

What to draw

The first step is to think of what you want to draw and animate. Here are some examples:

- Rain falling
- A sun setting over a mountain
- A flower growing

Practice drawing your still image on a spare piece of paper, remembering to keep it as simple as possible. Storyboard your drawing so you have a clear idea about the sequence of your animation. For example, if your image is of a flower growing, your book might start with just soil, then a shoot, then a shoot and a leaf, then a shoot a leaf and a bud and then a shoot, leaf and flower opening. It's helpful to only have one part of the drawing that moves, so is there a simple background that could stay the same throughout?

Creating your flipbook

Draw the first image in your sequence on your first piece of flipbook paper. Draw it slightly to the right of the page so that you don't obscure any of your drawing once you clip the paper together. Once you've drawn your first image, put the drawing against your light source (in front of a torch, against a window, etc) and put your next piece of card on top. You should still be able to see your original drawing through it to give you an outline for your next drawing. Using the light in this way allows you to see your previous drawing so that you can simply trace the objects that stay still and slightly change the part of your drawing that moves.

Continue repeating this process of drawing, holding your picture against a light and drawing the next image in your sequence using the last image as a template. The more slowly you alter the part of your drawing that is being animated, the smoother the animation will be, so the more drawings and pages in your flipbook, the better!

Once you've drawn out the sequence on each page of your flipbook, secure the pages together with either a bulldog clip or some elastic on the left hand side. There is only one way to test a flip book- Flip it! Hopefully you will see your beautiful hand drawn image coming to life.

For more information about how to create your flipbook, watch this video: youtu.be/Un-BdBSOGKY?si=xfrm8kiAUv9iH9C

Activity: Animal movement

In the creation of *Jungle Book reimagined*, the dancers spent time researching how to embody their animal characters. Each dancer has a specific way of moving that is portraying not just their animal, but also the personality of that animal.

Watch this video which explores the movement in the performance: [youtube.com/watch?v=1mU1TGvVxA4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1mU1TGvVxA4)



Literacy



Critical and Creative Thinking

Task: Embody the movements of a chosen animal. Research how this animal moves and the qualities of this animal?

Explore:

- Anatomy: Research their body and posture when they are still and moving. How can you use the anatomy of your body to morph into your animal?
- Character: What is the personality of your animal? How might their personality change the way they move?
- Qualities and dynamics: What movement qualities do the anatomy and character of your animal make you think of? What dynamics or action words can you think of to describe the movement of your animal?

Activity: Review the show

Task: Choose an impactful scene and analyse how the dramatic elements worked interdependently to create tension, emotion, atmosphere and meaning?

Students to consider the following prompts to start their analysis of the production.

- How does Akram Khan's overall message impact his audience?
- Describe how the performers embody their animal characteristics using gesture, movement and intention?
- How do the characters communicate their fears about climate change?
- How does the animation and the minimalist set design enhance the world of the urban jungle?
- How does the sound and lighting further the mood and atmosphere of the performance?
- What urgent messages are the audience presented with in the performance?



Literacy



Intercultural understanding



About the Company

Akram Khan Company

In July 1999 in the foyer of the Queen Elizabeth Hall in London, an animated and curiosity-filled conversation took place between the young gifted dancer/choreographer Akram Khan and an ambitious former dancer and just recently graduated arts manager Farooq Chaudhry. That conversation laid the foundation stone for a dynamic collaboration, culminating in the creation of Akram Khan Company one year later.

Inspired by Akram Khan's early training in the Indian classical dance form Kathak, and the hybrid language that organically emerged when Akram's kathak training encountered contemporary dance in his teens, a vision began to form, fuelled by a desire to learn and create through collaboration with the very best people across all the disciplines in the arts. The rules were simple: take risks, think big and daring, explore the unfamiliar, avoid compromise and tell stories through dance that are compelling and relevant, with artistic integrity.

In just over 23 years Akram Khan Company is now undisputedly one of the foremost innovative dance companies in the world. The programmes range from kathak and modern solos to artist-to-artist collaborations and ensemble

productions. The company has a major international presence and enjoys busy tours that reach out to many cultures and peoples across the globe.

Writer, Tariq Jordan

Tariq is a versatile artist with a rich background of Russian-Jewish and Iraqi-Muslim heritage. His debut play, *ALI AND DAHLIA*, inspired by his experiences working in Palestine was directed by Kerry Michael MBE and premiered to critical acclaim. The play earned three OffWestEnd award nominations, including most promising new playwright, and was a finalist for the best play award at the Writers' Guild of Great Britain.

Dramaturgical Advisor, Sharon Clark

Sharon is an award-winning writer and dramaturge for stage and film. Her theatre plays have been shortlisted for the Yale Drama Prize and the PapaTango playwriting award and she was the recipient of a Bruntwood Judge's Prize for her play, *Plow*. For 8 years she was Literary Producer at the Bristol Old Vic. She is Creative Director of Raucous, a site responsive theatre company that fuses performance, music, film, AR, AI and creative technology.

Composer, Jocelyn Pook

Jocelyn Pook is an award-winning British composer and musician known for her unique and versatile voice in contemporary music. Her work spans cultures and genres ranging from orchestral and choral to minimal, frequently inspired by found sound and field recordings and conjuring evocative soundscapes. Pook is also known for her highly acclaimed film scores such as *The Wife*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Brick Lane*, and Kubrick's *Eyes Wide Shut*.

Lighting Designer, Michael Hulls

Over the last 20 years Michael has worked exclusively in dance, particularly with choreographer Russell Maliphant, and established a reputation as a "choreographer of light". Their collaborations have won international critical acclaim and many awards: Sheer won a Time Out Award for Outstanding Collaboration, Choice won a South Bank Show Dance Award, PUSH, with Sylvie Guillem, won four major awards including the Olivier for Best New Dance Production and AfterLight won two Critics Circle awards.

Visual Stage Designer, Miriam Buether

Miriam Buether is an award-winning stage designer working internationally in theatre, opera and dance. Born in Berlin, she trained in costume design at Akademie für Kostüm Design in Hamburg, and in theatre design at Central Saint Martin's, London. Recent work includes *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Three Tall Women* and *A Doll's House 2 on Broadway*, *The Jungle for the Young Vic*, subsequently transferring to the West End and

New York, and Caryl Churchill's *What If It Only* for the Royal Court.

Video design and animation, Yeastculture

YeastCulture was established in London in 1999 as a space to explore innovative ways of connecting the stage, video and the screen into one integrated audience experience. Video design and projection mapping creations have since featured in orchestral performances, contemporary dance, ballet, theatre, gallery installations as well as visuals for live bands for international tours. The company works across art forms blending film, live performance, animation, documentary, set design and projection mapping.

Jungle Book reimaged Dancers.

Maya Balam Meyong

Native from Belgium with Cameroonian origins, Maya graduated from a BFA in dance at the PSPBB/Paris 8 University as well as from Rick Odum's professional training and teaching programmes under scholarship award. Alumnus of the Springboard Dance Montreal and of the Jacob's Pillow Contemporary Program, she is also an awardee of the Vocatio Foundation as well as Phil Collins' Little Dreams Foundation. Upon graduating, Maya moved to Brussels where she danced for different choreographers and since moving to New York, has danced with CR Dance Company.

Tom Davis-Dunn

Tom graduated from the Northern School of Contemporary dance (NSCD) in 2017 and has since

had the privilege of working with the likes of Lloyd Newson DV8/Rambert for the revival and world tour of *Enter Achilles*, Gary Clarke – *Wasteland*, Theo Lowe, Jamaal Burkmar, amongst many others. Tom has a keen eye for detail and strives himself on delivering the best quality of work at all times with enthusiasm and rigour. Tom constantly explores his movement practice with curiosity and generosity, immersing himself into the depths of his thinking body to find new paths, questioning his artistry with consideration and dexterity.

Hector Ferrer

Hector was born in Barcelona, Spain. He started dancing at the age of 10 pursuing his studies at the conservatoire of Barcelona Institut del Teatre. He moved to Madrid to continue his training with Victor Ullate and later moved to Stuttgart to complete his diploma at the Stuttgart Ballet Akademie, the John Cranko Schule. Since 2013, he has been dancing professionally for different dance institutions such as Opera Ballet van Vlaanderen and Ballet de l'Opéra National du Rhin. He has performed works from Pina Bausch, Maurice Béjart, Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, Edward Clug, Sharon Eyal, Andonis Foniadakis, William Forsythe, Akram Khan, Jiri Kylian, Kurt Jooss, Jean Christophe Maillot, Hans van Manen, Ohad Naharin, and Crystal Pite, among other choreographers as well collaborating and being part of different creations in Belgium, France, Spain and Germany.

Harry Theodora Foster

Harry (he/him) was born in Los Angeles and moved to the UK

as a child. He trained at Rambert School, graduating with a First Class BA (Honours) in 2022. Now a London-based dance artist and choreographer, he joined Akram Khan Company on their production of *Jungle Book* reimaged in 2022. He has also had the privilege of working with and performing works by Christopher Bruce, Richard Alston, Richard Chappell and Tim Casson (Casson and Friends Dance), among others. He has created a number of dance films and staged his own work in the UK, as well as co-founding Elbow Dance Collective in 2021.

Filippo Franzese

Filippo was born in Naples, Italy, where he started his modern dance studies. In 2016 he moved to Agora Coaching Project Junior Company, Italy, and in 2017 he began his studies at Codarts, University of the Arts in Rotterdam, Netherlands where he graduated in 2021. In 2020 he became a member of Skånes Dansteater in Malmö, Sweden, as an intern-dancer. From 2021, onwards he worked as freelance dancer for Marcel Leemann Physical Dance Theater, Bern, ARK Connor Schumacher, Rotterdam, WDTanztheater, Düsseldorf, and GrossDanceCompany, Amsterdam. In 2022, he was also the répétiteur at Codarts, University of the Arts, for the re-staging of the dance piece *Façade* by Andonis Foniadakis.

Bianca Mikahil

Born and raised in São Paulo, Brazil, Bianca moved to London in 2019 to study at Rambert School of Ballet and Contemporary Dance, from where she graduated with a First Class BA (Hons). Throughout her career Bianca has performed works

by Alleyne Dance, Joy Alpuerto Ritter, Ivri&Greben, Richard Alston, and toured with National Dance Company Wales performing works by Marcos Morau and SAY (Sarah Golding and Yukiko Masui). Bianca was one of the National Youth Ballet's Beyond Ballet Artists in 2021/2022 and co-created Elbow Dance Collective in 2021.

Max Revell

Growing up in Cornwall, Max began training in Plymouth, taking dance breaking and popping classes with Street Factory from age nine, later returning there to teach. As a teenager he travelled across the UK competing in battles and worked with several theatre companies before joining Northern School of Contemporary Dance in Leeds. In 2019 he won the BBC Young Dancer competition, graduating NSCED in 2009 he joined postgraduate company Verve. He has enjoyed working with the Hiccup Project, Frantic Assembly, Patricia Okenwa, Gary Clarke, Eleanor Sikorski, Susanne Thomas, Dickson Mbi, Tony Adigun, Barnaby Booth, Botis Seva, Caroline Finn and Matthew Robinson.

Matthew Sandiford

Born and raised in Luton, Matthew (he/him) discovered his passion for dance at 17 while studying performing arts. He furthered his skills at Trinity Laban, earning a First Class BA Honours Degree in Dance Theatre. Matthew's journey led him to an eight-year tenure as a company dancer at BalletBoyz, where he toured and performed internationally in acclaimed works by renowned choreographers such as Russell Maliphant, Ivan Perez, Christopher Wheeldon and more.

His artistic pursuits expanded with engagements at National Dance Company Wales and James Cousins Company before joining Akram Khan Company in August 2021. Matthew also serves as a Board Member for BalletBoyz, bringing depth to his multifaceted dance career.

Elpida Skourou

Elpida, born and raised in Athens, embarked on her dance journey at age 4 with ballet and contemporary dance. Exploring genres like hip hop and Latin during her teenage years, she channelled her passion into formal education and graduated from the Greek National School of Dance in 2018. Notable performances include Antony Lachky's with the Hellenic Dance Company Special Gala. Delving deeper, she became a certified Pilates teacher. Her professional career commenced at the Athens and Epidaurus Festival, featuring in Christos Papadopoulos' Exercise 27. Joining AKC in 2019, she contributed to *Father: Vision of The Floating World* in Bangladesh and appeared in *MOVE*, Netflix. As Assistant Choreographer and dancer, Elpida worked with RootlessRoots in collaboration with the Greek National Opera for the Finality project in 2021. Selected for *Outwitting the Devil* from 2020 to 2022, she toured globally, gracing historical theatres like the Herodes Atticus in Athens.

Holly Vallis

All their life, Holly has been questioning and challenging the ways we, as a society, grow, move and live and as they've entered the profession, how this can exist within art and movement

expression. Over the past couple of years, Holly has been trying to integrate what they continue to learn about their own identity, community, and imperatively, the experiences of those belonging to different communities into their day-to-day life as well as their work. Holly trained at Rambert School of Ballet and Contemporary Dance and after graduating worked with TanzTheater Münster, Ballet Cymru, and Matsena Productions before joining Akram Khan Company in 2021.

Jan Mikaela Villanueva

Jan Mikaela (she/her) was born and raised in the Philippines. She was a full government scholar of the Philippine High School for the Arts and recipient of the Outstanding Student Artist Award. At the age of 15, she joined Ballet Philippines where she performed and toured the company's repertoire for three seasons. She has performed and worked with renowned choreographers such as Paxton Ricketts, Anh Ngoc Nguyen, Zoltan Fodor, Eve Chan, Carlo Pacis and Alice Reyes. A Full Academy Scholar and recipient of the HKSAR Government Scholarship Fund (ROA), Mika obtained a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Honours) degree with First Class Honours at The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts before joining the Akram Khan Company in July 2022. Aside from performing arts, Mika is also passionate about dance science, writing, outreach programmes and giving back to the arts community by mentoring students.

Lani Yamanaka

Lani Yamanaka is a fourth-generation Japanese American

artist based in California. Upon graduating from UC Irvine, Lani started her freelance career as an original ensemble dancer in Pearl by Daniel Ezralow, which premiered at Lincoln Center. As a freelance artist, she has performed works by Edward Clug, Yin Yue, Bryan Arias, Alba Castillo, Kat Burns, Kate Weare, Yayoi Kambara, Shanda Sawyer, Laura O'Malley, and as a company member with SF Danceworks, Entity Contemporary Dance, and ODC Dance. In 2018, she was Dance Captain for the off-broadway production Dragon Spring Phoenix Rise, her first time working with choreographer Akram Khan and associate choreographer Joy Alpuerto Ritter. She went on to collaborate with AKC as Lead Dance Artist for *Father: Vision of the Floating World* featuring in MOVE, Netflix.

Links

AKRAM KHAN: DANCING CREATURE (Interview with Akram Khan):

danceicons.org

Guardian Review:

theguardian.com/stage/2022/apr/08/akram-khans-jungle-book-reimagined-review

Timeout Review:

timeout.com/london/dance/jungle-book-reimagined-review

The Arts Desk:

theartsdesk.com/dance/jungle-book-reimagined-sadlers-wells-review-doomy-revision-kipling-stories

Culture Whispers:

culturewhisper.com/r/dance/akram_khan_company_jungle_book_reimagined_sadlers_wells/17382

Akram Khan Company

akramkhancompany.net/productions/jungle-bookreimagined/

Kathak Dance example:

youtu.be/UBYqv21c0Yk?si=1cdO6NgFXwp99Us1



