

Title: In the Company of Shadows

Creator: Lynne Bradley

Year: 2016



Research Background

In the Company of Shadows was the culmination of a 3-year practice-led research project which drew on theory from the interdisciplinary fields of Interculturalism, Translation Studies and Innovation research to propose a new model for ethically-driven cross-cultural and transcultural performance work. Earlier research and writings around intercultural communication and arts practices, such as theatre, focussed on cross-cultural failure, misunderstanding, misappropriation and highlighted cultural differences. This research aimed to find a new, more productive framework to discuss intercultural, transcultural and cross-cultural practices in the context of innovative contemporary performance.

Research Contribution

The project contributed to understandings of issues involving the transposition of cultural product, the ethics of cultural exchange and difference, and their relationship to artistic innovation in contemporary transcultural and cross-cultural performance praxis. Bradley's direction demonstrated how the emerging rubric of Cultural Translation (from the field of Translation Studies) can be employed as a useful language and methodology for engaging with innovative transcultural performance grounded in ethical practice. The project also presented the first English account of Japanese dance company Dairakudakan's unique training and devising methods, making them available to Australian performing artists and audiences for the first time.

Research Significance

In the Company of Shadows won the 2017 Philip Parson's Prize for best 'performance as research' project in Australia awarded by ADSA, the peak academic association promoting the study of theatre in any performing medium throughout the Asia-Pacific region. In the Company of Shadows received critical and scholarly acclaim. TIME OFF arts editor Baz McAlister praised the production as 'bold, innovative and memorable' and 'boundary-pushing theatre at its very best.'