

Three by

EKMAN



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SUPPORTING EDUCATION

Episode 31 · Tuplet · Cacti

INTRODUCTION

In *Three by Ekman*, all three works showcase the hallmarks of Ekman's style: exuberant and complex rhythms in which the dancers are at one with the music: a deep pleasure in the human interactions of dance: and witty, stylish staging.

As well as a wide range of insights related to the production, this resource includes a collection of cross-curricular activities to introduce you and your students to the rhythmic, witty and fun works of Alexander Ekman.

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THREE BY EKMAN CURRICULUM LINKS

In this unit you and your students will:

- Learn about the elements that come together to create a ballet experience.
- Identify the processes involved in making a theatrical production.

Curriculum links in this unit

Values

Students will be encouraged to value:

- **Innovation**, inquiry and curiosity, by thinking critically, creatively and reflectively.
- **Diversity**, as found in our different cultures and heritages.
- **Community and participation** for the common good.

Key competencies

- **Using language, symbols and text** – Students will recognise how choices of language and symbols in live theatre affect people's understanding and the ways in which they respond.
- **Relating to others** – Students will develop the ability to listen actively and share ideas regarding theatrical ballet performances.
- **Participating and contributing** – Students will be actively involved in their cultural community, understanding the importance of creative environments.
- **Thinking** – Students will reflect on their own thinking and learning after the personal experience of attending a live theatre show.

Learning objectives for Levels 7 & 8

Level 7 students will learn how to:

- **Understand dance in context** – Investigate and evaluate the effects of individual, social, cultural, and technological influences on the development of a variety of dance genres and styles.
- **Develop practical knowledge** – Extend skills in the vocabulary, practices and technologies of selected dance genres and styles.
- **Communicate and interpret** – Analyse, explain and discuss aspects of performance and choreography in a range of dance works.

Level 8 students will learn how to:

- **Understand dance in context** – Investigate, analyse, and discuss the features, history, issues, and development of dance in New Zealand, including the contribution of selected individuals and groups.
- **Develop practical knowledge** – Extend and refine skills, practices, and use of technologies in a range of dance genres and styles.
- **Communicate and interpret** – Critically analyse, interpret, and evaluate the artistic features and the communication of ideas in a range of dance works.

NCEA

Three by Ekman, and the use of this resource, is ideal for NCEA level dance teachers and students who are learning to analyse and appreciate a dance performance.

INTRODUCING ALEXANDER EKMAN

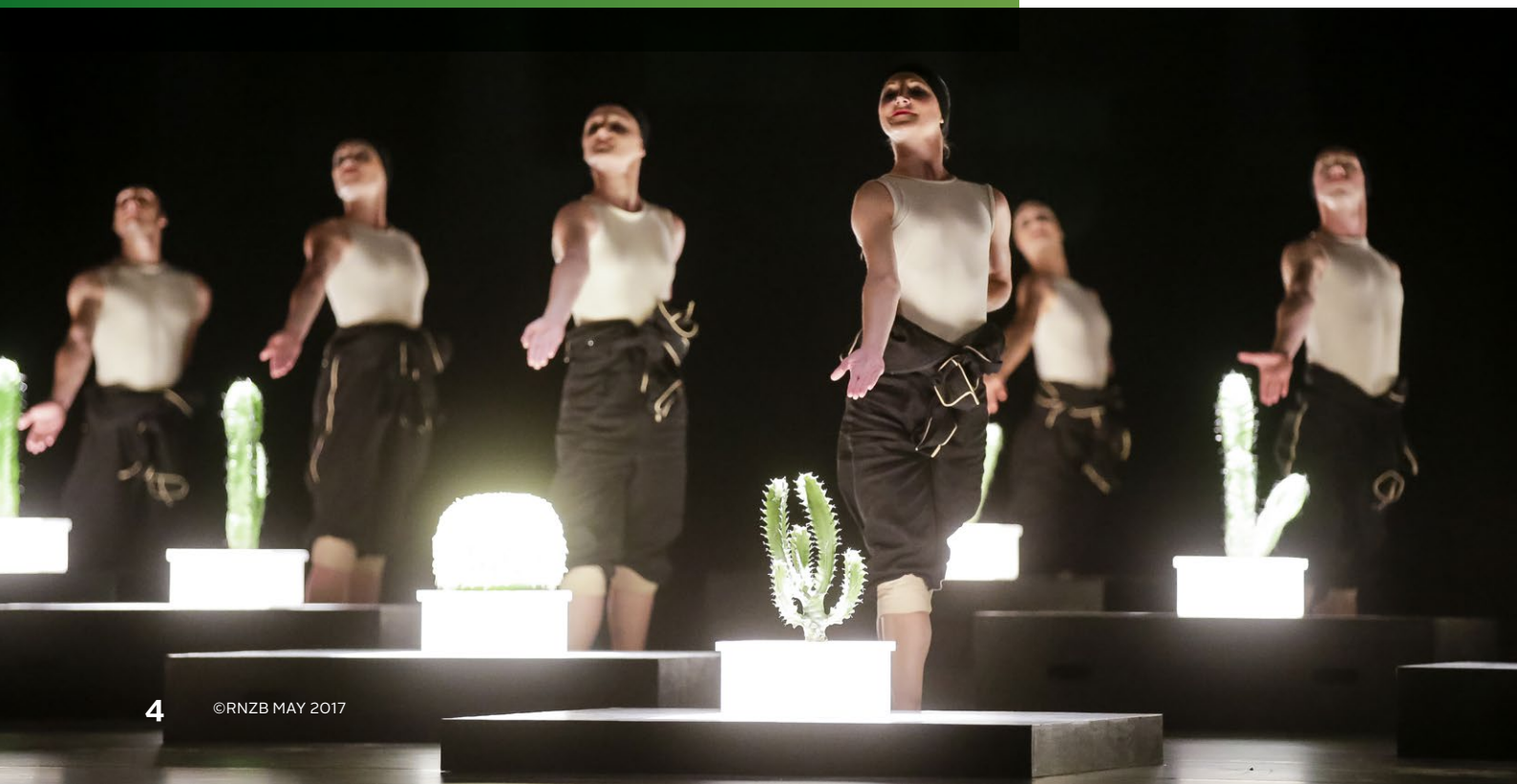
Alexander Ekman is an international choreographer and director creating pieces for theatres, opera houses and museums. He also directs films and creates live performances and events in pop up locations around the world.

Ekman is known for his fast paced timing and witty humour and clever transitions. He aims to create work which the majority can relate and connect with. Since 2006 he has devoted his time creating pieces which both entertain and question the observer. He aims to transform the atmosphere in the audience and to always surprise the audience.

Ekman has created and collaborated with around 45 dance companies worldwide. These include among others the Royal Swedish Ballet, Compañía Nacional de Danza, Ballet de l'Opéra du Rhin, Boston Ballet, Sydney Dance Company, Royal Danish Ballet and Vienna Ballet.



ALEXANDER EKMAN



TUPLET

NEW ZEALAND PREMIERE

Alexander Ekman *video and set design*

Nancy Haeyung Bae *costume design*

Amith Chandrashaker *lighting design*

Mikael Karlsson *music* (with additions from Bart Howard's 'Fly me to the moon', performed by Victor Feldman on his album *Jazz at Ronnie Scott's*)

Ana Maria Lucaciu *staging*

Tuplet was created for Cedar Lake Contemporary Ballet and premiered at The Joyce Theater in New York City on 22 May 2012.

Tuplet is a swift, pulsating, 18-minute tour-de-force for seven dancers which asks the question: 'what is rhythm?' Utilizing a score created in collaboration with the dancers' own rhythmic impulses and employing their bodies as percussion instruments, the soundscape is integrated with original electronic music composed by Mikael Karlsson. The composition bounces back and forth between the live body sounds of the dancers and the recorded score in combinations of irrational rhythms and groupings, to stunning visual and aural effect.

Following the work's premiere, in 2012 Ekman collaborated with pop singer Alicia Keys on a special performance of *Tuplet* at the annual Black Ball event in New York City to raise money for HIV and AIDS in Africa.



“ Alexander Ekman's *Tuplet* is deft entertainment that becomes something more clever and magical. It's all about the interplay between audible and visible rhythms. The dancers begin by bopping to their own vocalised sounds. A marvellously cartoonish solo is pretty much beatboxing in movement form. A lineup of performers is triggered into jittery actions as their names are called from a rhythmic register. At the end a wash of rhythm-free ambient sound bathes the stage and the mood becomes almost mystical. The parting shot is amusingly cheeky: a silent film of an audience clapping that leads, like a barefaced cue, to our own loud applause. ”

THE GUARDIAN, APRIL 2016



MUSIC

Mikael Karlsson *Composer*

TUPLET & EPISODE 31

Mikael Karlsson lives in Harlem, NYC. He moved to New York from Sweden in 2000 and graduated *summa cum laude* with departmental honours with a Master's Degree in classical composition from the Aaron Copland School of Music in 2005.

Karlsson's music has been performed at Carnegie Hall, Le Poisson Rouge, Lincoln Center, the MoMA, as part of the Ecstatic Music Festival at Merkin Concert Hall, at the Festspielhaus in Baden-Baden, the Oslo Opera House, the Royal Swedish Opera House, the Vienna State Opera, Théâtre des Champs Elysées, The Ingmar Bergman Center at Fårö, The Joyce Theater, BAM, and at new music festivals and opera houses across the world. His commissions for dance include works for the Norwegian Opera and Ballet (*A Swan Lake*, *Resin* – Ekman), NDT 2 (*Left Right*, *Left Right* – Ekman), Ailey II, the Royal Swedish Opera and Ballet (*Tyll*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* – Ekman), and many works for Cedar Lake Contemporary Ballet, including *Tuplet*.

Karlsson is a very versatile composer who is currently developing three operas but he has also released over a dozen albums with chamber works and soundtracks ranging from pop and film music to sound collages, dance scores and avant-garde concert music.

Karlsson enjoys an ongoing working relationship with Alexander Ekman. Since they first started working together, in 2012, the two have presented seven stage works – among them *Tyll* (Royal Swedish Ballet, 2012; US premiere in 2015 by The Joffrey Ballet), *A Swan Lake* (Norwegian National Ballet, 2014) and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Royal Swedish Ballet). Their full evening work for the Semperoper in Dresden, COW, premiered in March 2016.

FUN FACT

The duet recording in *Tuplet* is actually Alex's voice and that of the composer he works with, Mikael. Most of the voice in *Tuplet*, with the exception of the first solo, is Alex's.

PRODUCTION

Amith Chandrashaker

Lighting designer

Amith Chandrashaker completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts at Rutgers University: Mason Gross School of the Arts in 2005, and a Master of Fine Arts at New York University: Tisch School of the Arts, in 2012.

His selected credits for theatre include: *Twelfth Night* (The Public), *Her Requiem* (LCT3), *Fidelis* (The Public), *Ping Pong* (The Public), *The Convent of Pleasure* (Cherry Lane) *Ike*

at Night (UTR/ The Public), *Quiet, Comfort* (Hoi Polloi), *Take Care* (The Flea), *Platonov* (The Kitchen/Jay Scheib), *The Hatmaker's Wife* (Playwrights Realm), *Book of Disquiet* (Peak Performances), *Ghosts* (Theatreworks), *Stoop Stories* (Weston Playhouse), *Carnival Kids* (Lesser America), *The Woodsman* (Oberon Ensemble), *The Drawer Boy* (Soho Playhouse), *Baal* (Hoi Polloi). For opera, he has created lighting for *The Scarlet Letter* (Opera Colorado), *Abduction from the Seraglio* (Atlanta Opera), *Cato in Utica* (Opera Lafayette) and *L'elisir d'amore* (The Curtis Institute). For dance, his premieres include works with Sidra Bell, Alexander Ekman,



Aszure Barton, Kate Weare, Cedar Lake Contemporary Ballet and Rennie Harris Pure Movement.

STAGING AND LIGHTING

One choreographer, three works, three lighting designers, five New Zealand venues (all different sizes). Contemporary dance appears less complex when compared to traditional productions with large sets but the Ekman triple bill is a technically challenging tour. This is the first time that *Tuplet*, *Cacti* and *Episode 31* are performed together and

as you would expect from such a slick and dynamic programme of dance, each one has its own high spec artistic light requirement.

Conversations with Amith Chandrashaker

(*Tuplet*), Tom Visser (*Cacti*) and Nicole Pearce (*Episode 31*) began several months ago to discuss the challenges presented by three individual lighting designs and how this would impact on the final design for the RNZB's national tour of *Three by Ekman*. Following this process the RNZB technical team has been able to draw up one design which is flexible enough to satisfy the artistic requirements of the three lighting designers and incorporate the differences between each venue. There is going to be a significant amount of lighting equipment above the clean lines of the stage, and space on the lighting bars will be pretty tight. The three designers are currently adding finishing touches to their designs during the rehearsal and technical period in Wellington prior to the opening night.



TECHNICAL DRAWINGS

COSTUME DESIGNER

Nancy Haeyung Bae

Costume designer

Born and raised in New York and educated at Parsons School of Design, Nancy has designed for most of her life.

She was co-founder of the brand aulle. and designed for J.Crew, Gap, Isabel Toledo and Theory, among others.

She collaborated closely with the Artistic Director of Cedar Lake Contemporary Ballet for seven years. Nancy has been responsible for the costume designs of productions such as the Dance Installations at the Detroit Institute of Arts Museum Gala and the Giorgio Armani Young Artists Awards at The Guggenheim, New York, as well as working with choreographers Crystal Pite and Alexander Ekman.

Nancy is passionate about dance and believes that costuming requires a fundamental obligation to movement; a technical commitment that provides structure to her process. Her creative dexterity blueprints itself into her designs and illuminates her vision. Nancy is currently a Senior Director of design at Gap Inc.

COSTUMES

The three female dancers and the four male dancers are all dressed identically with grey waistcoats and blue jean style trousers. To create a special effect, the costumes are all covered in powder. The RNZB dancers will perform bare feet.



Q&A WITH STAGER ANA MARIA LUCACIU



Ana Maria Lucaciu Stager for *Tuplet* and *Cacti*

Ana Maria Lucaciu was born in Bucharest, Romania. After graduating from the National Ballet School of Canada she joined Canada's National Ballet and went on to dance with the Royal Danish Ballet, Germany's Augsburg Ballet,

Lisbon's Contemporary Portuguese Dance Company and most recently, with New York's Cedar Lake Contemporary Ballet, where she danced for seven years. Lucaciu has performed works by Ohad Naharin, Crystal Pite, Hofesh Shechter, Jiří Kylián, Alexander Ekman, Jo Stromgren, Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, and many others. Ana Maria assists Alexander Ekman with new creations and stages his works around the world. She also teaches and collaborates frequently with artists and companies in the US and Europe. Lucaciu has a BFA in dance from Empire State College.

What exactly is your role?

When I'm remounting a piece of Alex's, my role is to cast the dancers, teach the dancers all the steps and transitions, make sure all the props and costumes are made according to the original versions, and basically get the piece ready for the stage and ultimately for the shows.

How and when did you start staging Ekman's works?

I began staging Alex's works in 2014, after working with him on a new full evening creation in Oslo. After a few months into the new creation he just looked at me and said: *Wanna do Cacti?* I had never even seen *Cacti*. I said: *Sure!*

But I knew Alex fairly well from before. We were good friends, and I had also worked with him as a dancer before, so I understood his work from the inside too. After assisting him in Norway, where I watched him create something from scratch, I got an even deeper understanding of his intentions, his ways of approaching movement, musicality, theatricality, aesthetic. I felt like I got a full insight into his work laboratory.





What is the rehearsal period and the process involved staging works by Alexander Ekman?

It's pretty exhausting! And it is my favourite thing to do. It requires a lot of focus and clarity – you have to know exactly what you are showing for each individual dancer, be it a man or woman's part, a group, duet, solo, trio. You must know exactly what the counts are, what the spacing is, the timing of all the moving pieces. Most importantly, you have the responsibility of maintaining the true essence, the true spirit of each work. That is the most essential task. I try to always ask myself: what would Alex say, how would he explain this movement, this rhythm? What is the overall feeling of this work? Am I getting the dancers to achieve it? Beyond the physicality, beyond the counts and the meticulous work that needs to go into teaching the steps, am I striking the right tone for the work? For me, it's the most important to serve Alex's vision as best as I possibly can.

Any differences from one company to another?

Well, yes. Every company has its own dynamic, and even hierarchy which as an outsider you need to learn quickly. Schedules are always an issue. Rules and regulations which can either help or make your life a lot harder. But I generally find that dancers all over the world are excited to learn Ekman repertory, which makes my life a lot easier.

Hear Ana talk about Alex's works, including some video clips of rehearsals with the RNZB dancers.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=63ZyfGYOLdk>

What's at the essence of Alexander Ekman choreographic style?

Rhythm. Alex is one of the most rhythmical people I have ever met. He is also an incredible mover so that's a pretty spectacular combo right there. His works are physically challenging, but even more so rhythmically difficult.

For Alex anything can become a rhythm: your body, your breath, claps, snaps, clicks, sounds, words, text, names. That is a running motif in all of the works presented here. You will maybe recognize similar rhythms in both *Tuplet* and *Cacti*, and perhaps even in *Episode 31*.

CLASS DISCUSSION

Can you identify some movement motifs that are in all three works?

How would you describe Alexander Ekman choreographic style?

CACTI

Alexander Ekman *choreography, set and costume design*

Tom Visser *lighting and co-set design, technical supervision*

The New Zealand String Quartet *performs music of Joseph Haydn, Ludwig van Beethoven and Franz Schubert*

Spenser Theberge *written and spoken text*

Ana Maria Lucaci *staging*

*Thanks to Patrick Marin,
Stepping Grounds Arts/Culture Management*

Alexander Ekman created *Cacti* for Netherlands Dance Theatre 2. The first performance took place at the Lucent Danstheater in The Hague, on 25 February 2010.

In *Cacti*, Ekman turns his keen eye upon the scene that nurtured him: contemporary dance itself. A gleeful and knowing parody of the art form's greater excesses, *Cacti* is an affectionate, pointed and often hilarious deconstruction of the affectations of dance.

Sixteen dancers stand, seemingly trapped, on oversized Scrabble tiles. While a string quartet plays, and spoken recordings give tongue-in-cheek narration of the action, the dancers run, fall, writhe and try to escape their invisible prisons; eventually – and this is the important bit – they each acquire a cactus. But what does it all mean?!



“

I created *Cacti* about seven years ago for the Netherlands Dance Theatre in The Hague. This work is about how we observe art and how we often feel the need to analyse and ‘understand’ art. I believe that there is no right way and that everyone can interpret and experience art the way they want. Perhaps it’s just a feeling that you can’t explain or perhaps it’s very obvious what the message is.

Cacti was created during a period of my life where I was very confused and upset every time someone would write about my work. I did not find it fair that one person was going to sit there and sort of decide for everyone what the work was about. I have stopped reading my reviews, but still question this unfair system mankind has created.

While creating *Cacti*, for the first time I had the chance to create a work with musicians in the studio, which was a new way of working for me. Together with a string quartet we created a rhythmical game between dancers and musicians which became the score for the work. *Cacti* demands a high concentration both from dancers and musicians, which makes it very exciting to observe. I have always been fascinated by human capability during highest concentration and our way of acting in a state of emergency.

I have made around 40 pieces up to date and *Cacti* is definitely one of those works for which I will always feel a certain love. It is extremely hard to create a piece which feels complete and finished from beginning to end. I think with *Cacti* we somehow managed to arrange the pieces of the puzzle in a way so that the curve feels complete.

I hope that you will enjoy watching and experiencing *Cacti* and that it will continue to spread its message across the world. ”

ALEXANDER EKMAN

Cacti was nominated for the Dutch dance prize Zwaan in 2010 and for the Critics' Circle National Dance Award (UK) and an Olivier Award in 2012. *Cacti* continues to entertain audiences around the world with its important message.

Hear Alexander talk about *Cacti* including some video clips of rehearsals with the RNZB dancers.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cdLvB2KKKdU>

FUN FACT

Cacti has been performed by at least 20 companies around the world, (in the southern hemisphere by Sydney Dance Theater).

The recording of the *Cacti* duet is the original, made with the original dancers from Netherlands Dance Theater.

MUSIC

Music for the first part of *Cacti* was collectively assembled, improvised and composed by Tinta Schmidt von Altenstadt, David Marks, Saskia Viersen, Artur Trajko and Jan Pieter Koch, musical coordinator. The original musical score includes live and recorded performances of the following works:

- **Joseph Haydn** – Sonata No. 5 'Sitio' ('I thirst') from *The Seven Last Words of Our Saviour on The Cross*, Opus 51, Hoboken XX/1B
- **Ludwig van Beethoven** – String Quartet No. 9 in C, Opus 59 'Razumovsky', section from Andante con moto quasi allegretto
- **Franz Schubert** – Presto from String Quartet No. 14 in d (D810), 'Death and the Maiden'. Symphony in d minor 'Death and the Maiden' IV Presto by Franz Schubert arranged and orchestrated by Andy Stein. 'Death and the Maiden' orchestral recording courtesy of Naxos
- **Joseph Haydn** – Allegro from String Quartet No. 16 in A, Opus 9 No. 6, Hoboken III:24





New Zealand String Quartet

Helene Pohl *first violin*

Monique Lapins *second violin*

Gillian Ansell *viola*

Rolf Gjelsten *cello*

The RNZB are fortunate to have secured the New Zealand String Quartet to perform on stage with their dancers. The String Quartet is an important integrated visual effect of the work. All the members of the group also move around while playing which can be tricky for the cellist who is using a special harness to hold his instrument.

Celebrating its 30th season in 2017, the New Zealand String Quartet has established an international reputation for its insightful interpretations, compelling communication, and dynamic performing style. Much-loved by audiences at home and around the world, the Quartet performs over eighty concerts to popular and critical acclaim each year.

Career highlights have included performances at London's Wigmore Hall, the prestigious Frick Collection in New York and in Washington's Library of Congress. In recent years the group has toured to Canada, the USA and the UK on a regular basis as well as performing in Mexico, Curaçao, Korea, Australia, Germany, Poland, the Czech Republic, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Sweden and China.

The Quartet's extensive discography ranges from masterpieces of the classical repertoire through to works by numerous New Zealand composers, including the complete chamber works for strings by Douglas Lilburn. They are currently engaged in recording a three-CD Brahms series for Naxos.

The ensemble has been Quartet-in-Residence at the New Zealand School of Music at Victoria University since 1991, and violinist Helene Pohl and violist Gillian Ansell are co-artistic directors of the biennial Adam Chamber Music Festival in Nelson. The three long-serving Quartet members have been awarded the MNZM honour for services to music in New Zealand.

You can listen to a movement of Beethoven quartet no. 8 played by these talented musicians here:



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uM-7qZvzDjo>

PRODUCTION

Tom Visser

Lighting Designer Thomas Visser grew up in the countryside of West Ireland. At the age of 18 he started working in music theatre through his theatrical family.

After six years he started working in dance through the Netherlands Dance Theatre. Since 2005 he has created original designs for choreographers Crystal Pite, Alexander Ekman, Johan Inger, Stijn Celis, Lukas Timulak, Sharon Eyal and Peeping Tom, just to name a few. Recently Tom has been creating his own projects through art installations and interactive media.



STAGING AND LIGHTING

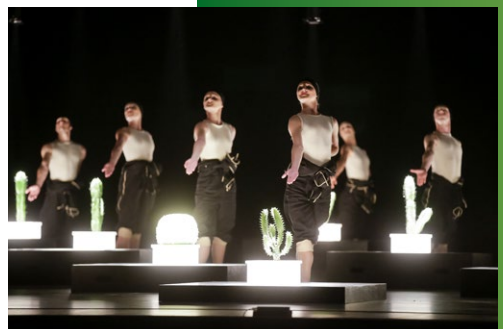
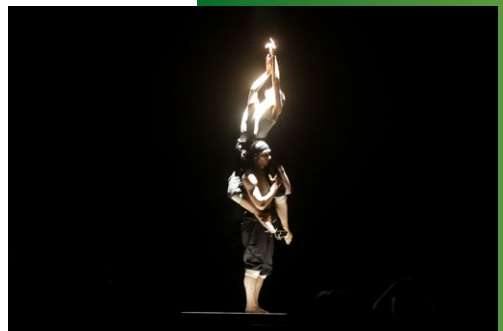
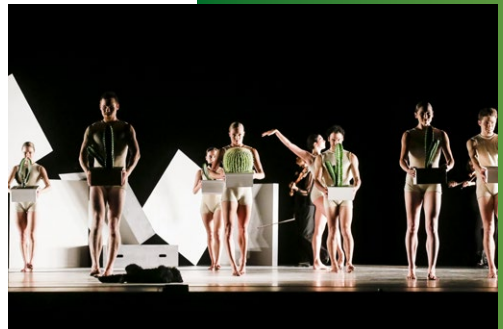
The staging is a black panorama box with masking which is much bigger than usually; it gives us 20 meters width of dance floor (standard dance floor being 12x12 meters).

This highly visual work relies heavily on lights effects; a total of six lighting bars are used – four bars which fly in and out live using the contra weight and two bars that are animated using a counter-weight flying system.

Props include 16 square boxes of various heights as well as 16 handcrafted cacti. When Alexander was asked why some cacti, he simply replied “it’s a flower with attitude!”

COSTUMES

The 16 dancers (eight couples) all wear a flesh leotard and a black boiler suit which are all slightly different in the details creating the effect that we can’t differentiate the male from the female dancers. All the dancers are dancing bear feet and wear a cap full of floor reserve for a special effect moment related to the movements of the choreography.



EPISODE 31

NEW ZEALAND PREMIERE

Alexander Ekman *video and set design*

Luke Simcock *costume design*

Nicole Pearce *lighting design*

Mikael Karlsson *music* (with interpolations from Erik Satie *Gymnopédie No. 1* and Ane Brune 'Do You Remember')

Christina Rossetti

William Allingham

Eleanor Farjeon

Robert Louis Stevenson

William Hughes Mearns

Edward Lear

*spoken excerpts
of poems*

Episode 31 was created for the Senior Graduation Class at The Juilliard School in New York City. It premiered at the Peter Jay Sharp Theater in New York City on 14 December 2011.

Episode 31 is a large group piece consisting of a number of fast paced scenes created by the dancers.

From an upbeat drumming sequence to a quiet comment on beauty by Erik Satie, this piece is a showcase for the young enthusiastic energy of these very athletic dancers.

When Ekman created this piece, he also experimented with dance in public locations: 20 dancers suddenly burst out dancing, in the subways, streets, squares and parks of New York City.

For the purpose of the short film created for all the New Zealand performances, the RNZB dancers left the stage to perform Alexander Ekman's *Episode 31* in many of Wellington public iconic locations; they experimented with dance in Oriental Bay, the Civic Square, the Botanic Gardens and the Cable Car.

Reactions from the public was mixed: with lots of laughs but also people avoiding the dancers.

THE BOTANICAL GARDENS



ORIENTAL BAY



PRODUCTION

Nicole Pearce

Lighting designer



Nicole Pearce has had a distinguished career in lighting design, specialising in theatre and dance.

She has been in demand all over the world. Among the most famous companies she has worked with we find the Boston Ballet, the National Ballet of Japan, the American Ballet Theatre, the Finnish National Opera and the Nederlands Dans Theater.

STAGING

Minimalist look with only a lamp shade, a ghost light and three fifteen metres rolls of dance floor (two metres width).

COSTUME DESIGNER

Luke Simcock

Costume designer



Luke Simcock is in his 14th season at the Juilliard School where he serves as Costume Shop Supervisor. Since 2004, Luke has also served as Wardrobe Consultant and Coordinator for Lincoln Center Festival.

Additional theatrical credits include the Alley Theatre, American Stage Theater, American Repertory Theater, Boston Ballet, Berkshire Theatre Group, Cedar Lake Contemporary Ballet, Chicago Dancing Festival, Finnish National Opera, The Joffrey Ballet and Shen Wei Dance Arts.

His design credits include *Semper Fidelis*, *Episode 31*, *Smorzando*, *Hubbub*, *Thanks for Sharing- Starburst Commercial Trilogy*, *My Price Point*, *I Can Only Come So Far*, *Parallel Lives*, *A Christmas Story*, *Uncle Bend's a Home Cooked Narrative*, *The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe*, *Backstory* and *The Trojan Women*. His film credits include *4:44 Last Day on Earth*.



COSTUMES

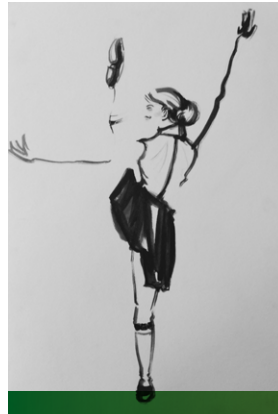
Luke and Alexander's design concept for this work makes different aspects of formal wear playful, original and expressive regardless of the dancer's gender. The dancers all wear black and white with the exception of the male duet and the Walker.

Male duet: a white waistcoat with black and white kilts with oxford black shoes and white long socks with suspenders.

The Walker: a grey suit with matching shirt and tie.

To accentuate the effect, all the dancers have a mini moustache, and for a nice final touch the hairstyle of the female dancers is done in an old 1930's Hollywood style.

Admire Luke's sketches below:



POINTE SHOE GIRL



MALE DUET



TABLEAU WATCHING THE MALE DUET



ACTIVITIES

Three by Ekman Activity

As a group warm-up, get the class to stand in a circle. This activity can be done standing still in the circle or keeping a consistent step tap going. One person claps a rhythm that goes over four beats then the rest of the group claps that rhythm back. The next person in the circle claps their rhythm and the class claps it back. Carry on around the circle until everyone has created/clapped a rhythm.

To progress/adapt this, students can make their rhythm using any part of their body and their rhythm can go over eight beats.

Split the class into pairs and get each pair to create a rhythm that goes over eight beats just using claps. You may want to specify that each person contributes four beats worth. Once they have created their rhythm ask them to find as many different ways as possible to sound out their rhythm, e.g. using claps, stamps, clicks, voice and different body parts. Get each pair to choose their two favourite ways of sounding out their rhythm, and remember them for later on.

Then get each pair to find a way to put movements to their rhythm; the movements don't have to make a sound but must have the same timing as the sounded out rhythm.

Next, get each pair to put their three rhythm phrases together – the two sounded out rhythms, and the version using movement. They can put them together in any order, and they can manipulate their rhythm dance any way they want. They can add canon, change or add different levels, they can make their phrases travel, they can repeat a phrase or part of a phrase, and they can change their formation throughout the piece.

When the class has practised enough they can share their rhythm dances with the rest of the group.



Playing with Rhythms Activity

To make a whole class sequence, choose three of the eight count rhythms using claps, clicks and stamps etc. and get the pair that created the chosen rhythms to teach the rest of the class. Once everyone has learnt the rhythms, split the class into four groups and give each group an order that they will do the rhythms in.

For example,

- Group 1 might do rhythm A two times, then rhythm B once, then rhythm C once.
- Group 2 might do rhythm C once, then rhythm B twice and rhythm A once.
- Group 3 might do rhythm C once, rhythm B once, rhythm A once and rhythm B once.
- Group 4 might do rhythm B once, rhythm A twice and rhythm C once.

Make sure that each group is doing rhythms for the same amount of counts, 4 x 8's or 6 x 8's etc. as the groups will do their rhythm sequence at the same time as each-other. It doesn't matter if some groups do a rhythm at the same time as each-other as long as not all of the groups are doing the same thing at the same time.

Using the same rhythms as above, you can just get the students to do them in a straight canon, so they're all doing them in the same order but a few counts after each-other.

The group can also do the rhythms in unison but using different levels, and/or different body parts to make the sounds.

You can put all of the above sections together to make a really long rhythm sequence.

