



East London Dance announces a 12-month programme of new productions, projects and partnerships to celebrate its 30th anniversary in 2018

13 April 2018: East London Dance announces a 12-month programme of new productions, projects and partnerships in 2018 to celebrate three decades as the leading producer of creative dance experiences for the people of east London and beyond.

Production highlights for the year include ***IDENTITY***, a performance colliding the eclectic and alternative fashion and dance cultures of east London, directed by Tony Adigun at Shoreditch Town Hall (12-14 April) and ***East Wall***, a large-scale spectacle of dance and live music directed by Hofesh Shechter in the moat of the Tower of London - the first major public art event in the moat since the Poppies installation in 2014 - across five nights from 18-22 July.

The anniversary year also offers an opportunity to look ahead to the next three decades and beyond as work begins on the first dedicated home for East London Dance, as the organisation leads on the creation of **the UK's first National Talent House for Urban Culture**, in partnership with music talent development organisation, Urban Development.

Funding from Arts Council England and the Mayor of London's Good Growth Fund will enable the fit-out of a historic warehouse and modern extension as part of the Sugar House Island development adjacent to the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park delivered by developers Vastint UK. The creation of this Talent House is inspired by the need to ensure that diverse and disadvantaged young people from east London benefit from the legacy of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, and the centre will offer an aspirational space to unlock the potential of emerging talent across a raft of creative disciplines and enable progression to education, employment and enterprise.

Polly Risbridger, Director of East London Dance, said: *"Over the last three decades East London Dance and east London have seen huge changes, but our driving mission to enrich lives by presenting the very best dance opportunities to those least likely to receive them, has never changed. 2012 was a particularly momentous year for east London with the Olympic and Paralympic Games and Cultural Olympiad. Six years later, our commitment to build on this extraordinary legacy of presenting outstanding and awe-inspiring art, born from unexpected collaborations and in unconventional locations, showcasing the vibrant diversity of east London and east Londoners is unwavering.*

*It is fitting that the centre-piece of our anniversary year is our most ambitious production to date, and one that unites every aspect of the work we pride ourselves in doing. **East Wall** will connect the local artists we work with to a world-class artist in Hofesh Shechter; putting their work on a national stage; giving local young people the chance to participate in this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity; and producing art in a unique environment with themes that resonate through our local community; all in partnership with internationally-renowned organisations.*

It is thrilling to know that as we embark on our next 30 years, work has already begun to allow us to take the first steps of that journey from our own home, a building that will allow us to spread our message and influence even further afield."

Over the past three decades, East London Dance has played a central role at the start of many of the UK's most exciting choreographers and dance companies, including Wayne McGregor, Tony Adigun (Avant Garde Dance) and Candoco Dance Company. They have united world-class artists, organisations and venues with local east London communities, including Hofesh Shechter, Frantic Assembly, Willi Dorner, Rosemary Lee, Protein Dance and the Royal Opera House.

EAST LONDON DANCE PRESENTS ITS 30th ANNIVERSARY PROGRAMME:

Across all its four areas of dance expertise – **productions, participation, artist development and dance leadership** - East London Dance aims to ensure the strongest possible offer of dance is delivered for its artists, participants and audiences and is helping to redefine what dance can do to build happy and healthy communities. The 30th anniversary programme is an opportunity to share the breadth and depth of this mission.

PRODUCTIONS:

2018 will see East London Dance continue to push the boundaries of dance production, presenting work outside of traditional theatre spaces to create art that is inspired by the architecture of its surroundings reflecting the energy, diversity, eclecticism and aesthetic of east London, and giving voice to the issues that are important to its local communities.

IDENTITY at Shoreditch Town Hall (12 - 14 April), will see dance and catwalk collide in a pulsating gig-like atmosphere as blazing new artistic voices challenge preconceptions of sexual, cultural, gender and ethnic identity, bringing audiences a slice of east London creativity that defies conformity. Collaborating with fashion creative Sabrina Henry and directed by Tony Adigun (*Fagin's Twist*), Avant Garde Dance Company, Ffion Campbell-Davies & Julia Cheng of House of Absolute, Houston Dance Collective and Rugged Estate will infuse hip hop, breaking, voguing, krump and waacking with their own unique styles in an unforgettable evening of raw energy.

East Wall at the Tower of London (18 - 22 July), is an epic production that will see a cast of over 150 dancers and musicians fill the moat of one of London's most iconic buildings for an extraordinary outdoor performance that embraces east London's diversity and puts its rich cultural heritage centre-stage. Directed by the internationally-celebrated Hofesh Shechter in collaboration with four outstanding young choreographers - Becky Namgauds, Duwane Taylor, James Finnemore and Joseph Toonga - *East Wall* is inspired by the stories of the communities that have grown up around the Tower. It will be the first major public art event in the Tower of London moat since the Poppies installation *Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red* in 2014.

PARTICIPATION:

For the past 30 years, East London Dance has been a pioneer of dance participation. Whether offering young people least likely to engage in the arts unique opportunities through collaborations with organisations such as the Royal Opera House and Frantic Assembly, or addressing social issues through work such as the ongoing delivery of **HeadStart**, a bespoke programme to improve the resilience and wellbeing of young people most at risk of mental health issues, East London Dance continually strives to find new platforms to empower and engage young people.

In 2018, **The Fi.ELD**, East London Dance's unique programme to develop the future innovators of dance, will equip selected 16 - 25 year old dance creatives with the skills, resources and financial investment to make their ideas a reality. Under the guidance and mentorship of the East London Dance producers and Vicki Igbokwe (Uchenna Dance) participants will design, develop and deliver their own project ideas for **The Fi.ELD Festival** on 27 & 28 October, an event created specifically by young people for young people.

Since its creation in 2012, 50 young people have graduated The Fi.ELD programme and 100% have since secured paid employment in the arts. The Fi.ELD has recently secured five years of funding from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation to continue to develop the skills and knowledge of young innovators of the future.

Working to bring communities together, in December 2018 East London Dance will host an intergenerational Tea Dance with performances from **Leap of Faith**, the organisation's seniors dance company. The event will give older and younger members of the east London community the chance to connect, learn from each other and share their passion for dance.

ARTIST DEVELOPMENT:

East London Dance is committed to identifying, nurturing and launching artists and dance producers with distinct creative voices.

In February 2019, the **Dance Enterprise Ideas Fund** will award bursaries of up to £5,000 plus in-kind support to independent dance creatives looking to research, test or launch new artistic and entrepreneurial ideas. Since the Fund's launch in 2016, East London Dance has brought together investors from nine organisations including Sadler's Wells and English National Ballet to award bursaries totalling £45,000 to 14 outstanding dance creatives. Their inspiring ideas include the launch of an inclusive Latin and ballroom dance company; a film and dance project to get young children advocating a healthy lifestyle to their peers; a professional development network for hip hop artists; and a new digital innovation for deaf audiences.

In August 2018 in partnership with London College of Fashion, UAL, East London Dance will launch its second annual **Creative Lab for Costume, Dance and Technology**. The two week-long intensive programme will give up-and-coming costume designers, choreographers and creative technologists the opportunity to come together to explore these different areas of practice and develop collaborative new ideas.

DANCE LEADERSHIP:

As English National Ballet, Sadler's Wells and Studio Wayne McGregor begin to move to east London, East London Dance is driving a partnership with these internationally-renowned dance organisations to make the area a global hub for dance.

The organisation's **Dance Enterprise Ideas Summit** in February 2019 will offer artists, producers, venues and organisations from east London and beyond the opportunity to share and exchange enterprising ideas in dance. The day will include round-table discussions and insights from across the sector tackling a range of pertinent topics. The highlight of the day will be the shortlisted pitches for the Dance Enterprise Ideas Fund and the final awards ceremony.

Notes to Editors:

Productions now on sale:

IDENTITY

Shoreditch Town Hall

12 - 14 April

shoreditchtownhall.com

IDENTITY is an East London Dance and Shoreditch Town Hall co-production

East Wall

The Tower of London

18 - 22 July

eastwall.org

Produced by East London Dance and Hofesh Shechter Company, commissioned by Historic Royal Palaces and presented by Historic Royal Palaces and LIFT

Press contact: Ben Stanley, Communications Manager, East London Dance
ben.stanley@eastlondondance.org | 020 8279 1059

About East London Dance

Enriched by three decades of experience, East London Dance is the leading producer of creative dance experiences for the people of east London and beyond. We produce inspirational projects and events to engage our diverse local communities in dance, and nurture the next generation of artists and professionals. We champion enterprise, collaboration and innovation in order to create dance of exceptional quality that is seen regionally, nationally and internationally. We specialise in a tailored and responsive approach that places our communities and their needs, interests and ambitions at the centre of our work. In the last three years we have attracted diverse live audiences of over 120,000, of which over 50% are least likely to attend the arts. We have engaged and inspired over 11,000 people to participate in dance activities and launched the careers of many successful artists, choreographers and companies. East London Dance is based at Stratford Circus Arts Centre in the vibrant borough of Newham, and predominantly works across eight east London boroughs.

eastlondondance.org

30 year highlights:

Over the past three decades, East London Dance has played a central role at the start of many of the UK's most exciting choreographers and dance companies;

- **Wayne McGregor** started his career as a dance animateur for Redbridge Council and collaborated closely with East London Dance in early 1990s. This collaboration has continued ever since, leading to both organisations being founding members of Dance Cluster East alongside Sadler's Wells and English National Ballet.
- **Candoco Dance Company** worked closely with East London Dance in the early days of the organisation, jointly pioneering inclusive practice for disabled and non-disabled people.

- East London Dance ran the UK's first choreographic development programme for disabled artists in 2005, *Cultural Shift*, launching the creative careers of **Caroline Bowditch** and **Mark Smith** (Deaf Men Dancing).
- East London Dance has supported choreographer **Tony Adigun** and his company, **Avant Garde Dance Company** since 2004, producing a number of productions including 10 years of innovative hip hop dance showcase **Collabo**.

Produced high profile events with national partners;

- East London Dance has enjoyed a **ten-year partnership with the Royal Opera House** producing ambitious new productions with young people inspired by main stage shows. Young dancers from East London Dance were the first young people to ever perform on the main stage at the ROH not in a ballet or an opera.
- In 2013, the organisation was commissioned to produce a new Commonwealth-inspired show for **Queen's Coronation Festival** in gardens of Buckingham Palace. The performance was broadcast on BBC1 to audiences of 3.1 million people.
- East London Dance was a Big Dance Hub from 2009 – 2016 leading an expansive programme for the **London 2012 Festival**.

And united world-class artists – including: **Hofesh Shechter, Frantic Assembly, Willi Dorner, Rosemary Lee** and **Luca Silvestrini** - with local east London communities.