

A window into the visual arts and heritage organisations in Nottingham

welcome

A window into the visual arts and heritage organisations in Nottingham for artists and producers working with movement, dance and choreography.

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ABOUT


Artists and organisations working with dance and choreography view Nottingham as having an enviable and vibrant museum and visual art sector, with a potential to realise an extraordinary range of works and practices.

This stems from a particular set of histories and collaborations that have evolved between the sector, the wider cultural offer in the city, and FABRIC's leadership in presenting dance in museums and galleries in Nottingham.

This resource has been conceived to look inside the workings of the scene in Nottingham as a legacy to the recent research projects *Re-Framing Dance* and *Dancing Museums – The Democracy of Beings*.

The video contributions explore how artists can access resources, the culture in these places, and offers examples of previous collaborations as a starting point or an opening for artists and producers looking for new connections.

In the final pages, the discussion event, *Landings, Imprints, Traces. Dance in The Gallery After Rosemary Butcher* brings to the foreground the historic relationship between dance and the gallery mapped alongside her legacy as a leading British Choreographer since the 1970's and her relationship to Nottedance.

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Images from top:
Tommy Keenan at Gasleak Mountain. Image by Freddy Griffiths. Jamal Sterrett Phoenix performing at NAE Open 2022. Image by Tom Morley.

FABRIC

FABRIC is a strategic dance development organisation created from the merger of Dance4 and DanceXchange, bringing together over 60 years of combined experience. Based in Nottingham and Birmingham, FABRIC's vision is to inspire people through dance, transforming lives, communities and places, and being more ambitious for dance made, produced and nurtured in the Midlands.

In Nottingham, FABRIC's home is the international Centre for Choreography (iC4C), an exemplar creative facility from which FABRIC invests in artists' practice and delivers specialist support and space for the research, production and distribution of new choreographic work.

FABRIC's festival, Nottedance, has been hosted in Nottingham for more than 20 years. Foregrounding current perspectives from artists across the world, the festival presents work of the time, views and works from artists that seek to unearth new knowledge, test ideas and challenge the status quo. It has provided a significant platform for artists seeking to present work in gallery spaces since the late 1980s, while embodying a philosophy of curiosity, risk and doubt.



Image by Scott Sawyer.

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BACKLIT

Founded in 2008, BACKLIT is an internationally renowned artist-led, public gallery and studios supporting arts and culture in Nottingham. Housed in a historic Victorian building Est. 1872, the galleries feature across three floors, alongside their creative studios. They support local communities and the public with an annual free programme of exhibitions, events, and workshops.



For nearly a decade, Backlit has collaborated on a number of dance and choreographic projects, residencies, discourse events and has co-presented work by artists such as Sally Doughty (UK), Dinis Machado (PRT/SE), Franko B (IT), Andrew Tay & Stephen Thompson (CA) and Antonija Livingstone and Mich Cota (CA).

During Einstein on the Beach Exhibition (2015) by Robert Wilson Dance4 supported elements of the public programme, including Sally Doughty's response to Lucinda Child's original choreographic score from the opera and conversations about choreography, theatre and performance in gallery spaces.

"Since BACKLIT's inception we have been interested in the importance of creativity and creative practitioners in Nottingham."

"What does the work we do mean to the city and what is its relevance? That has always been a key theme and core objective of BACKLIT."

Matthew Chesney. Director, BACKLIT

BONINGTON GALLERY

Founded in 1969, Bonington Gallery has been at the forefront of Nottingham's rich and vibrant visual arts community for over fifty years, offering an innovative and dynamic programme of local, national, and international significance.

Situated at the heart of Nottingham Trent University's (NTU) School of Art & Design, the Gallery is surrounded by students and staff making, critiquing, designing, and researching across a wide range of creative disciplines. This 'art school' context is reflected throughout their multi-disciplinary programme of exhibitions and events – presenting and exploring practices related to visual art, fashion, film, music, and design.

Bonington Gallery has been an important venue for Nottdance festival over the decades and has presented a number of leading artists working in dance and choreography including Jérôme Bel, Rosemary Butcher, and La Ribot. The gallery has an archive with records of events and collaborations with Nottdance since the 1990s.



"We are surrounded by a lot of knowledge being formed, things being made, things that are in a state of being unfinished and state of discourse and deliberation."

Tom Godfrey. Director, Bonington Gallery

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GRASSROOTS SPACES

One Thoresby Street was a studio, exhibition, and event space that has played host to a diverse range of artists and creatives. Contemporary art, dance, and performance coexisted within the building's industrial spaces, often in collaboration. It was established in 2008 by a group of Nottingham Trent University students looking for workspace and community and it has been an important creative hub in Nottingham until it closed in 2022.

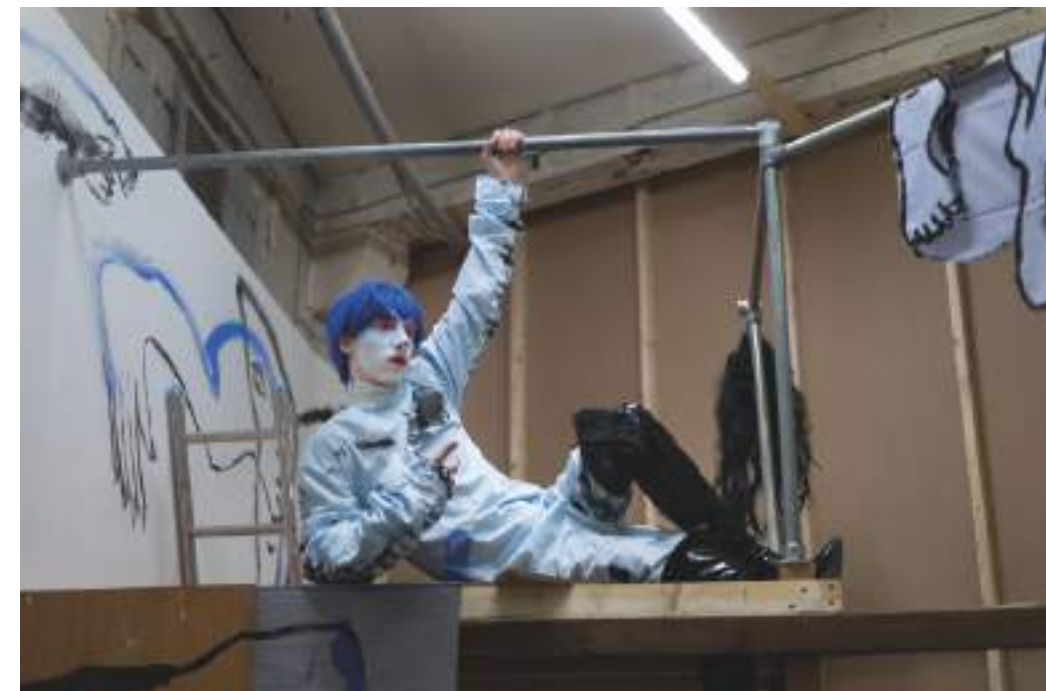
In its final years, it was run by three directors - Ellen Angus, Freddy Griffiths, Sophie Mackfall - and studio manager Adam Grainger. Since One Thoresby Street closed its doors, the grassroots artists who were based there have started to spread out across the city.

Examples include:

Gasleak Mountain - an artist-led creative space based on a previous practice of curating performance and parties with a broad interest in experimentation informed by the four artists who run it.

Forth - An independent project space based in the former caretaker's house at Primary. Stemming from Four/Four, a collective of graduates from Nottingham Trent University, Forth is open to meeting artists wanting a platform in the city, including recent graduates. It regularly presents audio visual installations and film.

Instagram:
[gasleakmountain](#)
[this_is_forth](#)



Above: Pádraig Condrón performing in Paul Kindersley's exhibition *Speak Your Story into Life* at Gasleak Mountain, 2022. Image by Freddy Griffiths.

LAKESIDE ARTS

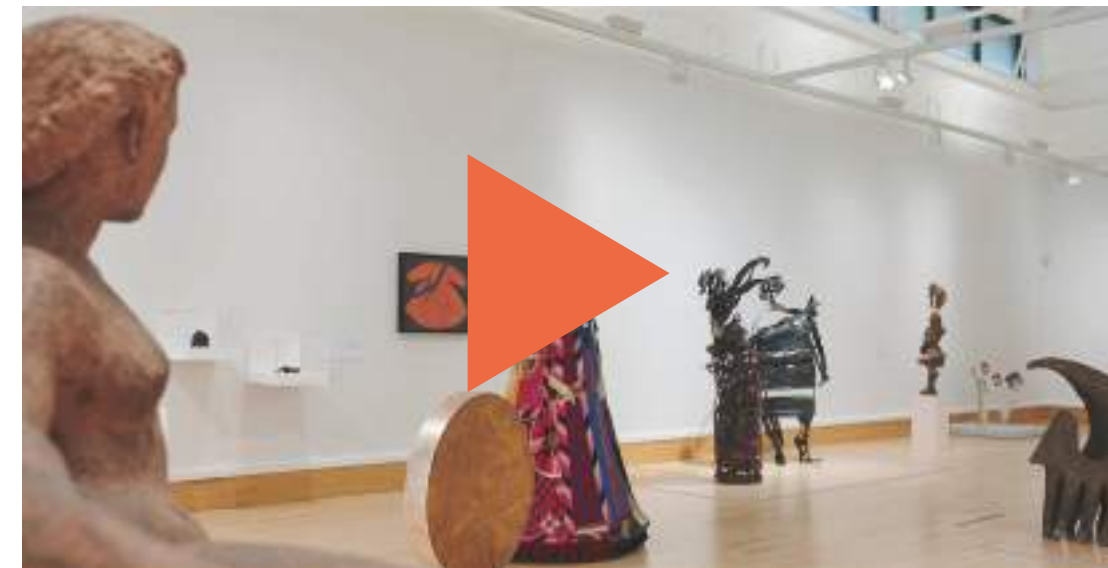
Lakeside Arts is the University of Nottingham's public arts programme. The Djanogly Theatre opened in 2001, adding theatre, dance, jazz, folk and world music to the established and nationally recognised exhibition programme in Djanogly Gallery and chamber music in the Djanogly Recital Hall. Located in the beautiful surroundings of Highfields and University Park, Lakeside regularly hosts development periods and production weeks for interdisciplinary projects including dance-led work. Around 185,000 people of all ages and abilities engage annually with Lakeside's cultural programme.

Lakeside Arts had a long-standing relationship with Dance4 which FABRIC seeks to continue. Together they co-present many dance works annually, as well as an ongoing partnership with the Centre for Advanced Training in Dance, U.Dance and Nottdance.

Over the last two decades Nottdance has presented works at Lakeside Arts by Hetain Patel, Maria Hassabi, New Art Club, H2DANCE, Caroline Bowditch and many others including a sculptural choreographic work in the grounds titled *A Call to Action* by Luke George.

Recently, Lakeside Arts has explored gallery-based dance research. Through Re-Framing Dance (2019-22) they hosted a research residency with Claricia Parinussa and Zoë Charlery (ID.Y) who undertook a site-responsive process of externalising and integrating embodied knowledge in dialogue with invited guests.

"Lakeside is a resource, a research lab, a development space and a public platform. As part of the University we can broker introductions to academics and researchers where there's a shared vision and we welcome the opportunity to support creatives with space, time, creative conversations and experimentation."

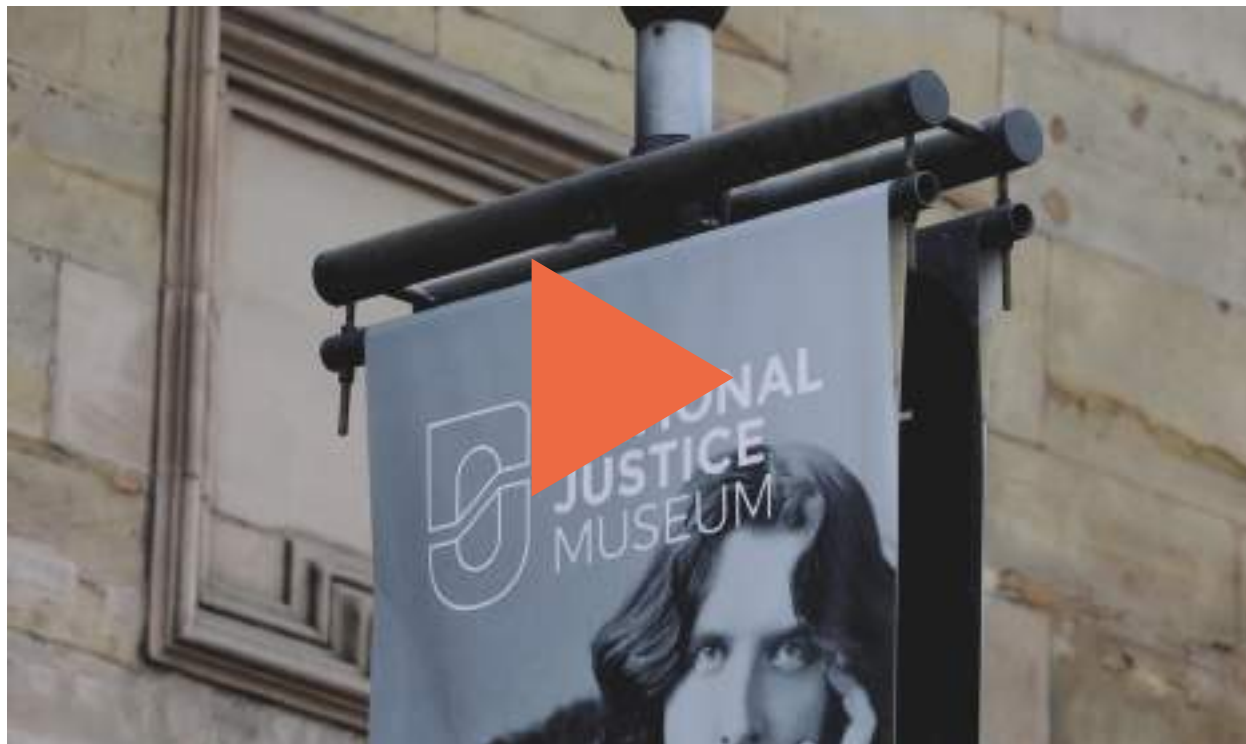


"It's often a whole-team experience and where helpful we encourage access to expertise and collaborative contributions from across our technical, multi-art form, learning and marketing officers, as well as members of our audiences."

Shona Powell, Director, Lakeside Arts

NATIONAL JUSTICE MUSEUM

At the National Justice Museum, through real spaces, real objects and real stories, they explore the impact that justice and the law has on individuals, communities, and society. There you can browse remarkable collections and examine fascinating objects that bring justice and the law to life in extraordinary ways. They have a curious set of authentic spaces including an original Victorian courtroom, Georgian gaol, exhibition spaces and more. In recent years, they have worked closely with artists and communities to explore new perspectives of justice and injustice through a programme of exhibitions, creative interventions and project labs.



"One of the questions we ask is, what matters to you?"

"I always talk about this place being infused with trauma and brutality and also hope and beauty."

"It's moving , It can be upsetting, It can be completely delightful, It can be joyful."

There is this really fluid, creative process that weaves it way though the building."

Andrea Hadley-Johnson, Artistic Programme Manager,
National Justice Museum

NEW ART EXCHANGE

New Art Exchange (NAE) is a ground-breaking, award-winning, and internationally recognised creative space in the heart of Hyson Green, Nottingham. They are dedicated to supporting communities and artists from the global majority, through contemporary art exhibitions, events, and engagement initiatives.

"A working relationship with an artist at New Art Exchange would be about collaboration...about going on a journey together and making that artist a member of the team. It's important that they are not just working with the curator but that they are working with the wider NAE family."

Melanie Kidd, Programme Director



Image by Tom Morley.

In 2022 NAE and FABRIC created *Re-Frame*. This commission in residence opportunity was for an artist working in dance, movement and/or choreography to experiment with cross disciplinary practice in the context of a visual art gallery and produce a new piece of work.

NOTTINGHAM CITY MUSEUMS

Nottingham Museums is a Nottingham City Council service that promotes the rich history preserved within the walls of seven historic sites across the city. Nottingham Museums is the oldest municipal museum service outside of London. It oversees seven unique historical sites: Newstead Abbey, Wollaton Hall and Park with Natural History Museum, Nottingham Industrial Museum, Nottingham Castle and Brewhouse Yard, and Greens Windmill with the Sherwood Foresters Regimental Museum located within the Castle grounds.



The Judges III, 2013 by Christina Mackie; Nottingham Castle.
Image by Jon Hartley.

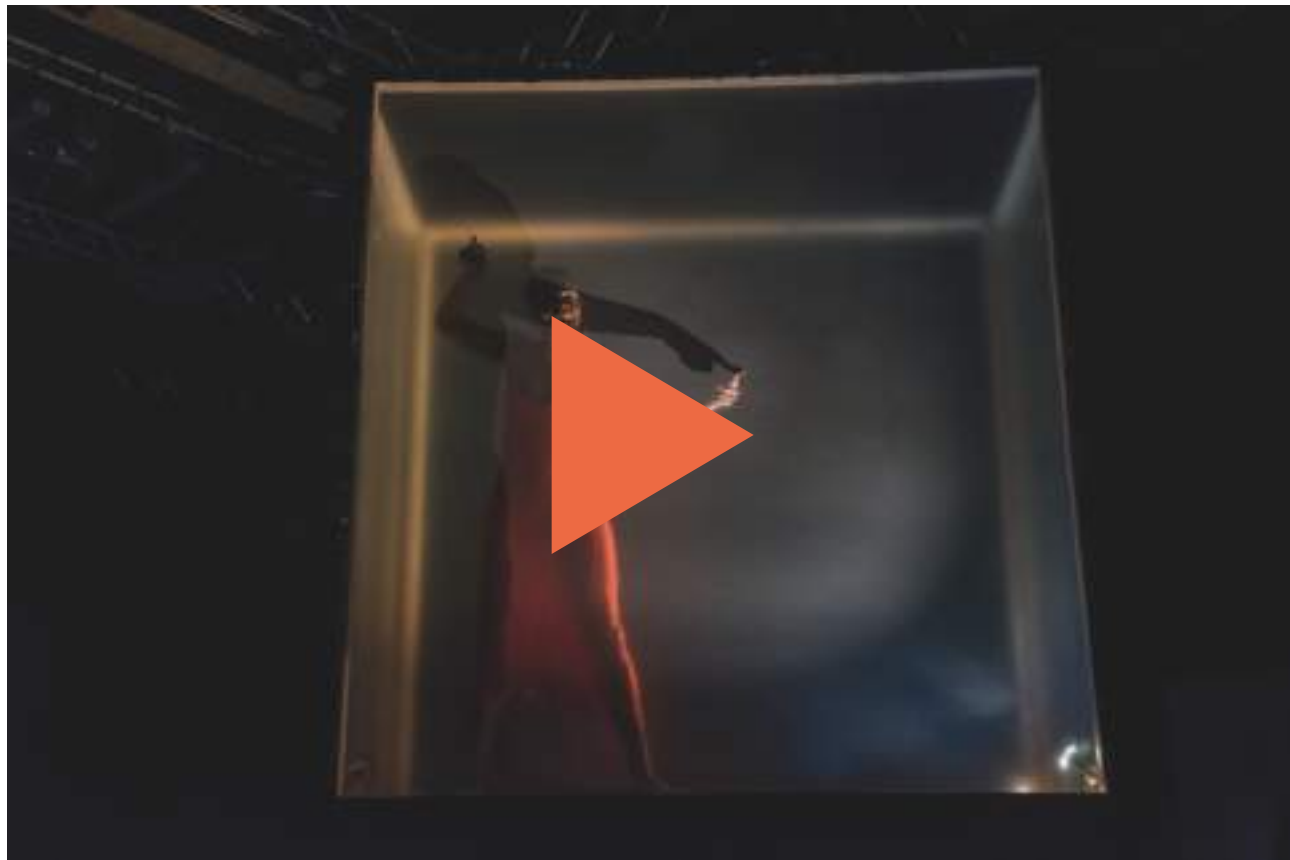


Close Distance, 2017; Caroline Broadhead, Nic Sandiland, Angela Woodhouse; Wollaton Hall.
Image by Freddy Griffiths.

Deborah Dean has been a leading voice and collaborator at Nottingham Museums with Dance4 since 2017 when the service co-presented *Ways of Being, Ways of Seeing* by Lucy Suggate. This pilot project that invited movement practices into the gallery at Nottingham Castle was the catalyst for other partnerships and collaborations in this area. These projects included *Dancing Museums II*, a European Union funded action research project that invited artists to undertake residencies in museums and galleries and to share their learning with peers in a European network.

NOTTINGHAM CONTEMPORARY

At Nottingham Contemporary, exhibitions, events, learning programmes, and research offer extraordinary perspectives on today's society, hosting stimulating and important discussions. They invite people to visit, discuss, debate, and experience the most exciting contemporary culture.



"Our relationships with artists are very collaborative and often quite open ended and it always starts with a dialogue and to try to understand their needs and where they are in their practice and what makes sense as a next step. It is very much focused around supporting their ambitions."

Nicole Yip, Chief Curator, Nottingham Contemporary

Many works by prominent artists from the UK and internationally, introduced to Nottingham by Dance4/Nottdance, have been presented at The Space in Nottingham Contemporary. This includes work by Nicola Conibere, Joe Moran, Maria Hassabi, Charlies Linehan, Wendy Houstoun, Matthias Sperling, Lucy Suggate and more.

During Nottdance 2020 choreographer Jenifer Lacy presented *Extended Hermeneutics* in the main gallery amongst the exhibition *Still Undead: Britain Beyond the Bauhaus*.

Nottingham Contemporary has been a partner in *CONTINUOUS and Dancing Museums – The democracy of beings* (2018-2021) which have involved members of their team and the public to be in dialogue about bringing dance to the gallery and through their involvement have invited artist to spend time in research and presentation.

PRIMARY

Primary is an artist-led contemporary visual arts organisation. They prioritise artistic research, provide studios and residencies to artists, and run a free public programme of exhibitions and events.

“We believe that artistic research is a public process, so we encourage participation in artistic production.”



Primary was a lead partner on *Re-Framing Dance* (2019-22) when it hosted a research residency curated by Nora-Swantje Almes.

Over three weeks, the research explored how movement practices and what we might consider “queer” sit in opposition to the operations of conventional art institutions: unpredictable, in flux, and improvised.

It included a series of interviews as part of a podcast series with choreographers, dancers, and queer party collectives to imagine a different set of requirements needed for producers, curators, and institutions.

“We’ve established an engaged and outward-looking community which supports artists to experiment and develop their practice.”

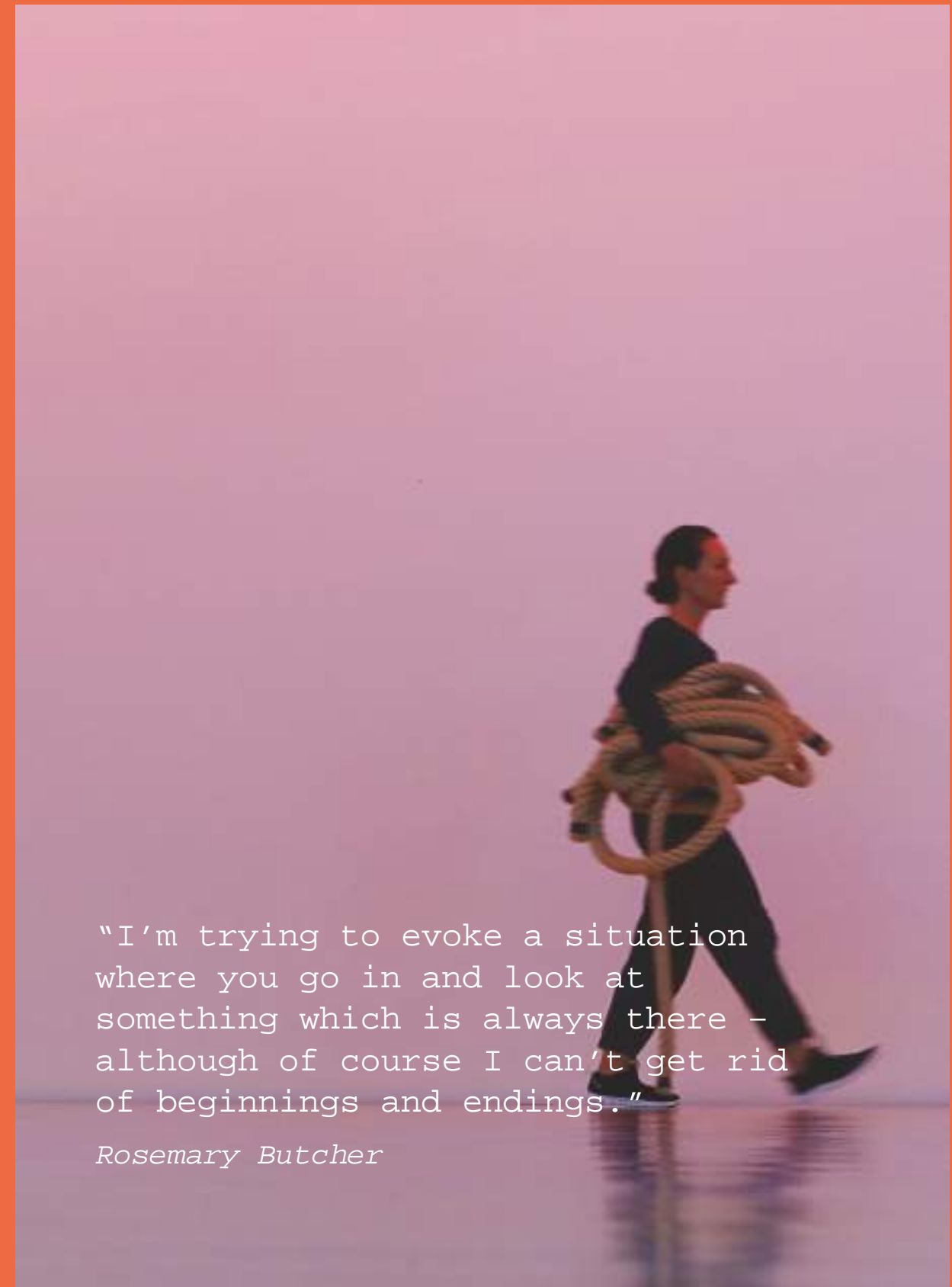
Colette Griffin, Artist Development Coordinator / Curator

'LANDINGS', 'IMPRINTS', 'TRACES'
DANCE IN THE GALLERY AFTER ROSEMARY BUTCHER

Nottedance has provided a significant platform for artists seeking to present work in the gallery since its inception in the late 1980s.

Nottedance 2015 was launched with work by Rosemary Butcher, known to many across the world as a leading choreographic voice in the UK since the 1970s until she died in 2016. Dance4 worked closely with Rosemary to curate past and current gallery works in the festival that highlighted the long-term relationship between Rosemary, Dance4, and Nottingham.

In this discussion event, that took place online in 2021, Stefanie Sachsenmaier (Middlesex University) is in conversation with Andrea Niederbuchner (dance curator and producer) and Sam Williams (artist) where they explore the particular affinities that gallery spaces offer dance in contemporary times.



"I'm trying to evoke a situation where you go in and look at something which is always there – although of course I can't get rid of beginnings and endings."

Rosemary Butcher



Together they draw on their long-term experience of closely working with Rosemary and discuss selected footage from her archive, thematising her specific framing of space and time through creating dance in gallery spaces, in view of exploring their relevance today.

The event draws on the history of alignment between the fields of dance and the visual arts, as part of which the placing of dance in gallery contexts emerged. With its beginnings in the early 1960s in the US, galleries continue to prove a popular setting for dance, including across the UK and wider Europe in current times.

Butcher contributes to this legacy as one of the earliest choreographers to have worked in visual arts spaces in the UK, with her presentation of *Landings* at the Serpentine Gallery in London in 1976 having marked the beginning of her career that closely aligned with the visual arts.

WELCOME

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Bonington Gallery/Nottingham Trent
University, Forth, Gasleak Mountain,
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New Art Exchange, National Justice
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