

SHRIMP DANCE

A person stands in the center of a dark room, illuminated by a circular spotlight on the floor. Behind them is a large, glowing rainbow-colored circle on the wall. To the right, a vertical beam of rainbow light projects onto the wall. The person is shirtless, wearing dark shorts, and has white body paint on their face and chest. They are gesturing with their right hand, palm facing forward, and their left hand is held lower.

Your sadness
is political

Paul Michael Henry

Jer Reid

Jamie Wardrop

Press

"This performance is that often rare instance of a multi-disciplinary production that feels organically fused together with a unifying aesthetic... The body cannot lie, and Henry attacks the challenge of moving with uncompromising intention with rigour. Henry is accompanied by musician Jer Reid on droning electric guitar and live visuals from Jamie Wardrop. Projections move between organic and inorganic, between waterfalls and the tile-lined pool Henry is seen submerging himself in. A piece about depression, medication and our effect on the environment, it's a loud yet nonetheless meditative piece of theatre.

– **The Skinny (★★★★).**

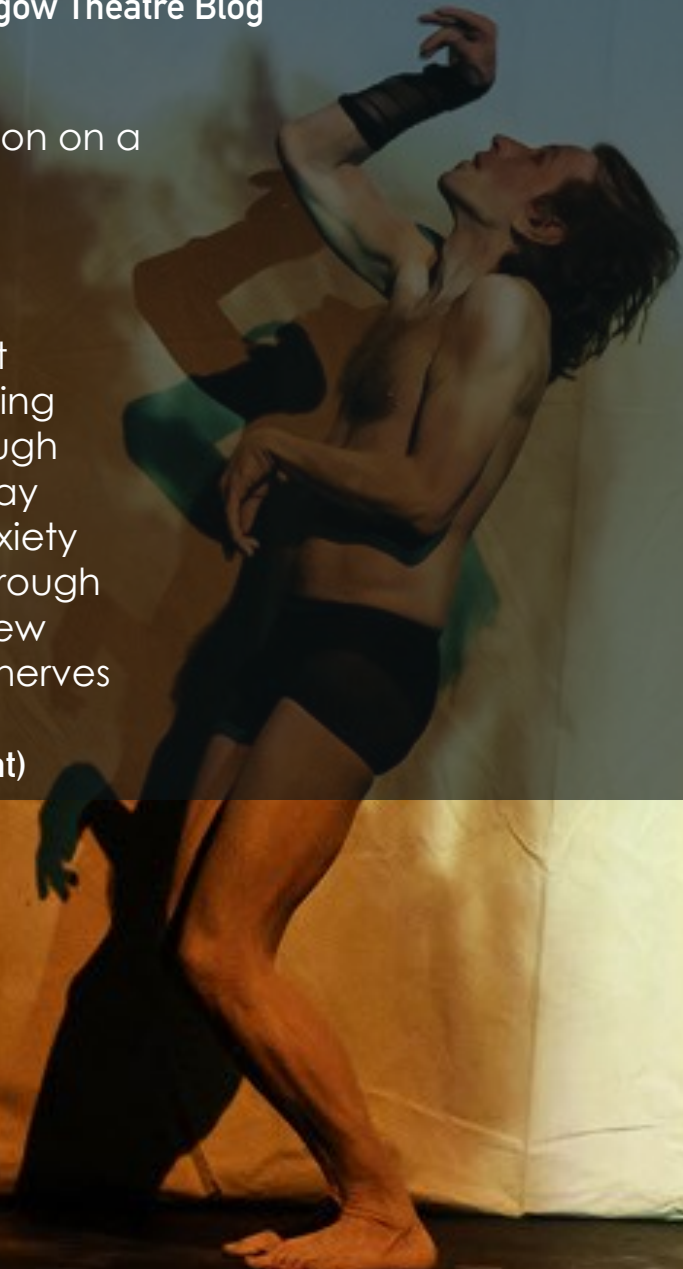
"A hypnotic hour of dance drama. The themes explored are huge: ecological crisis, mental health and consumerism, yet the moves are minute and precise – the sheer range, expressiveness and emotional impact of these are a testament to Henry's considerable skill... Utterly compelling - the astonishingly talented Henry has much to say." – **Glasgow Theatre Blog**

"A weighty, at times disturbing, meditation on a deeply troubling phenomenon"

– **Disability Arts Online**

"The performance, a work in progress at Dance Base in Edinburgh, sees him moving like a somnambulist, eyes closed as though in a trance, body flailing as he tries to stay upright. He veers from sheer terror to anxiety to acceptance, almost akin to going through stages of grief... Paul Michael Henry's new dance has the kind of quietude that unnerves and provokes in equal measure."

– **Lorna Irvine (reviewer for the List and Exuent)**



THE HUMANS ARE SO SAD THAT THE SHRIMP ARE GOING CRAZY.

SHRIMP DANCE is a live performance for three artists blending Butoh-infused contemporary dance with live music and live video art. It's a collaboration with marine biologist Professor Alex Ford (University of Portsmouth). Professor Ford found anti-depressants entering the sea through human waste are affecting the behaviour of shrimp. High levels of Prozac are causing shrimp to abandon their shadowy habitat and swim towards the light where they're often eaten.

SHRIMP DANCE broadens this research into a far-reaching comment on the medicalisation of profound sadness, linking our inner isolation to climate change, eco-anxiety and the havoc we're wreaking in the world at large (waste, ecocide, consumer capitalism and extreme inequality).

SHRIMP DANCE is a fully immersive experience reflecting the creative conversation between three art forms. Dance (Paul Michael Henry), music (Jer Reid) and visuals (Jamie Wardrop) reshape the work live, resulting in an interconnected dialogue between the disciplines which evolves with each performance. The piece was born out of an improvisation process that continues to be at the heart of the work.

The dance itself exploits Japanese butoh dance's unusually intense capability to embody otherness and go beyond the human. This is the ideal form for the subject matter, with the dance evoking a multi-species perspective including the petition of the humans to the ocean (help us! We're so sad!), the small voices of the shrimp and the predator gulls, the reply of the ocean (regarding time, cycles, eternity, harmony) and the moon which pulls the tides themselves and gives us our original name for mental dysfunction: lunacy. Through SHRIMP DANCE we seek to locate humanity again amidst the rest of the cosmos.

The artistic statement within the work links intimately to Paul's ongoing work with 'art as activism' focused on climate change and the ways in which ecological crisis articulates not only environmental breakdown, but also larger dysfunctions in the social and economic processes of 'business as usual' in late capitalism.

Paul began working on these issues in 2013, evolving the ideas for SHRIMP DANCE simultaneously with founding UNFIX (a festival presenting work around ecological crisis and platformed in Glasgow, New York City and Tokyo several times thus far: www.unfixfestival.com). The interconnectivity of these issues became increasingly apparent. How we feel as individuals, linked with how we behave societally, ultimately creates the basis for ecological collapse.

With SHRIMP DANCE we show a specific instance of human impact which viscerally links our emotions with resulting behavior and unforeseen consequences for non-human life. The specificity of the shrimp example makes ecological malfunction tangible, feelable and paradoxically helps bring an audience together through a focus on experiences of isolation.

SHRIMP DANCE was developed with support from Creative Scotland, Dance Base (Edinburgh), the Work Room (Glasgow), Platform (Glasgow) and the University of Portsmouth. It premiered in October 2017 as part of Scottish Mental Health Arts Film Festival, and was re-staged for UNFIX Festival 2019 at CCA Glasgow, funded by CreativeScotland. Most recently it has seen a sell-out run at Frankfurt's Winterweft festival (February 2020).

Technical Specifications

Running Time

50 Minutes

No Interval

Get In:

Full Day to install sound/Av/Plot Focus LX & Technical Rehearsal for an evening performance

Get Out:

1 Hour

Tech Support

From experience we have found:

2 x Venue technicians to help with Get-In /sound check one to operate Sound plus one to operate LX/AV during the show

Jer, Jamie and Michael are all experienced technicians and are able to assist.

Stage

If possible please send venue plans, lighting rig and kit list and we be able to advise ahead of arrival at the venue.

Minimum playing space: 8m width x 6m depth

Minimum height: 4m

Black Dance Floor - Ideally sprung floor

Black Drapes for stage

Full Black Out on stage & Auditorium

Stage at Room temperature appropriate for dance

1 Dressing Room with mirror and shower, and perhaps some sheeting for the floor for full body make up with close access to the stage.

We bring:

A laptop to run AV including accessories

A Laptop to run audio including accessories

A one metre circular piece of fabric with fibreglass rim that folds out to hang from rigging and project onto.

Two calico (fabric) hangings of 1.5 x 4.5 metres each-

1 Electric guitar plus effects pedals and cabling

4-way power extensions and international adapters where required

We require:

AV

Projection features largely in the production and it really benefits from a

1 X Projector rigged FOH or Stage with a throw

Minimum Specification: Full HD 1920 X 1080 high resolution / 4000 Lumens / Throw distance to cover back wall of stage

VGA Cable from Projector to operating position on stage (15m to 20m)

An extra 10 metre VGA cable running from AV position to sound position onstage. Ceiling rigging to hang calico fabric from and circular projection screen.

SOUND

Live musician on stage

Operator ideally monitors levels throughout the performance to avoid peaking.

As good a PA as possible (ideally with sub woofers).

Bass amp 4 X 10 cabinet and head: Ampeg, Hartke or similar. 300 Watts minimum.

An onstage monitor with signal pre bass amp.

Microphone for bass cab. (Sennheiser MD 421 or similar).

A small 8 input mixing desk. (could you let us know which model you have please?)

A screen monitor to see Jamie's visuals (a small LCD display with VGA input is fine).

One DI box.

A 3.5mm jack to stereo 1/4 inch jack cable to get sound from laptop to onstage mixer.

LIGHTS

There are a total of around 15 lighting cues in the performance.

With the large use of projection in the production lighting spill needs to be focused away from the projection surfaces.

Lighting plan available on request.

We bring 1 Gobo for a Profile fixture

Ideally we make use of

House lights

General white & cold wash downstage

Side Lighting

10 Profiles, spots for specials

4 RGB LED lights placed upstage and focused at audience - these can be operated and programmed by Jamie via DMX Dongle on stage

PROPS / SET

White backcloth or cyclorama for back wall

(we can bring if not available in venue)

Two tables with black cloth to cover approximately 1.5m width x 1m - placed Stage Right and Left for musicians and VJ onstage operating position during performance.

We have a short programme/hand out to give before to the audience before the show - assistance in printing greatly appreciated.

1 x white plinth 1m height x 0.5m x 0.5m top placed near audience entrance or access to seating bank to place props on.

