

LAKE



By Lisa Wilson

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CONTENTS

Themes and Curriculum Links

Synopsis

Character List

Q & A Interview with Lisa Wilson

PRE-PERFORMANCE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Power Play

Breaking Surfaces

Memory and Place

POST-PERFORMANCE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Staging *Lake*

In and Out of Water

Choreography Consequences

ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

THEMES

Human Relationships

Isolation

Nature

Gender and Power

Water

Curriculum Links

Contemporary Dance

Contemporary Australian Theatre

Year Levels

Year 10-12

SYNOPSIS

A SPIRIT presides over the lake. She is the harbinger of what is to come

A MAN and WOMAN enter setting up camp for the evening.

Unseen the SPIRIT retreats into the shadows.

The couple engage in playful teasing that sometimes leads to aggressive exchanges between them revealing hidden tensions in their relationship.

The SPIRIT enters into the camp area and sensing a strange presence they begin to investigate.

The WOMAN lies down and goes to sleep.

The SPIRIT joins the MAN transforming into many things – a bed, tent, wood fire, and even a sleeping bag. They fall asleep.

She returns to the darkness leaving him to himself.

The WOMAN awakens and rejoins him.

Tiny bubbles fall from the trees. She plays while he looks on.

He gets up and is in intent on spoiling her fun.

Unspoken differences erupt as huge ghost like figures engage in a battle of wills and shows of strength.

Conflict eventually gives way to forgiveness and they embrace one another momentarily re-united again.

The ghost figures disappear and the SPIRIT returns.

The MAN retreats into the shadows and the WOMAN and SPIRIT come together.

The MAN offers the WOMAN a paper boat/a message. She unfolds it, accidentally tearing the water logged paper. Despondent he retreats.

The SPIRIT and MAN enact the lovers shifting allegiances. She drowns and he performs mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.

The MAN and WOMAN are reunited in their continuing struggle. SPIRIT keeps watch.

The couple become more aggressive and desperate in their attempts to control the other.

Standing in between them, SPIRIT spirals at first slowly and then progressively faster as she draws power, finally collapsing to the ground. She sets the ripples of the water in motion.

The WOMAN and SPIRIT reunite and the SPIRIT grows stronger.

The WOMAN descends into deep water. She begins to drown.

The SPIRIT tries to gain strength and draw the rest of the 'spirit' from the woman. The WOMAN attempts to escape, but the SPIRIT recaptures her.

The WOMAN now sees the SPIRIT/sees what has been dredged up between her and the MAN, and chases her. The MAN joins in and all three wrestle in a battle to the death.

The MAN carries the extinguished SPIRIT on his back and tosses her out of the lake.

Exhausted the lovers reach out to each other once more.

Consider

All stories begin with place.

We can always return to a place in our memory and imagination long after we have left it.

Up to 60% of the adult human body is water.

Sometimes the person closest to us can be the most difficult to connect with.

Q& A with Lisa Wilson

What was your inspiration for making *Lake*?

Lake began in 2009 as a trickle of images and ideas from different sources. A colleague and friend who I had worked with in Expressions Dance Company, Zaimon Vilmanis, asked me if I wanted to share an evening of work at an initiative Ausdance Qld and Judith Wright Centre of Contemporary Arts offered, called Belltower II. So the work's evolution began as a 20 minute duet with Zaimon for this season.

For this initial first stage development I had been thinking about what a work would look and feel like, that was based at an Australian lake, (this was after seeing a studio showing of Queensland Ballet's *Swan Lake*), the extremes of intense beauty, yet chilling isolation, the stillness and solitude and primal undercurrents of what lies submerged?

I intended the work at this stage to use water as a metaphor for a couple's emotions, but to use no water, except as projection in constantly shifting shapes and forms.

From this first stage development I received funding the following year to have a 'proper' five week second stage creative development, with two other performers Timothy Ohl and Angela Goh (in addition to myself), a designer- Bruce McKinven, composer-Matt Cornell and dramaturge- Jennifer Flowers. It was in this creative period that my ideas for *Lake* truly crystallised, after more time to think about and research concepts that were initiated in our first duet.

One of the strong images I went into this development phase with was – emotional drowning, or drowning from the inside. We also wanted to use the idea of breaking the surface tension of a relationship and dredging up what lay beneath. During this process the collaborative artists I worked with were my inspiration and we developed the piece together.

Do you connect to the characters?

Even though I created and performed in this work, there is no specific emotional connection between me and the character I played, or any other character. This is not autobiographical (as I am very happily married!), but I think dredging up what becomes stagnant in relationships is something many people can relate to, even in a small way. I like to find an emotional commonplace with an audience and create a sense of common experience that will allow people a 'way in' to the work.

How do you begin the process of choreographing a dance performance? Do you come with fixed ideas? How much input do the dancers have in creating the movements? Describe the process of choreographing *Lake*.

For me the process of choreographing a dance work comes firmly from the original concept, and the stimulus and research that have developed from that. The five

week second stage development of *Lake* was where the majority of the piece was created. I didn't enter this development period with fixed ideas or a finished product in mind, far from it. I came in with a whole list of images, thoughts, task ideas and questions that we began investigating.

I saw the piece as having an over-arching idea of destruction and renewal and used a list of ideas to generate theatrical imagery and environments, and to develop new movement material. Some of the thoughts and tasks we improvised with to create physical manifestations for were:

- Submerged fears
- Ideas of strength and frailty, of incurable conflicts
- Drowning- emotional drowning
- Emotional states between weightless floating and being off-balance
- Peeling/washing away to reveal something
- Symbols and imprints
- Ways of trapping/hunting/caging
- Ways of setting free
- Place as a dimension of memory
- Distortion of light/shadow
- Survival of the fittest. Power struggles. A constantly shifting quest for balance.

I usually work generatively with movement material, that is to create something to then create something else. The dancers/performers are integral to the process as are the other collaborative artists. As I mentioned above, we work with improvisation and tasks and create a multiplicity of images to eventually form an emotional trajectory.

It was through this creative development stage also, that the inspiration for the final design came into being and the soundtrack and initial video imagery were developed. Through a divergence in my initial thoughts of projected images of water, my designer Bruce McKinven, suggested the whole work should be placed *in* water. This completely changed what the work became and was an inspired design concept. This stark and evocative space of the water-covered set provided a heightened environment in which to place the work.

Weighing the value of each element of the creative process is also key to my choreographic decision making. Balancing video projection, sound, design and creating a work with dramaturgical coherence was important to the final outcome of *Lake*.

You have choreographed for other companies including the Sydney Theatre Company, Queensland Theatre Company and Opera Queensland. What are the differences in working on other company's productions as opposed to your own dance works?

Choreographing on productions that aren't essentially my own dance works is a very different process. The best way I can describe it is - you are there to serve the director and the production in the best possible way you can. The decisions/final choices about what is needed or relevant for a scene or section of choreography are not necessarily yours to make. You do your best to interpret the needs of the director and how the choreography best serves the production. It is about trying to get into the mind of the director you are working with and contributing to their vision.

What excites you most about contemporary dance in Australia?

The diversity of practice and the boundless spirit and creative energy artists have, even with severely limited resources.

What do you think audiences will take away from seeing *Lake*?

I hope audiences will see a sophisticated, technically excellent, immersive dance theatre work.

One of my favourite quotes from a reviewer of *Lake* is- *"Don't think you need to be a dancer to appreciate this work, you just need to be human"*. This tells me we have succeeded in connecting with people on a very real and human level.

Of course I want audiences to find the choreography to be distinctive and original and the visual design and soundscape to be stunning, but I hope ultimately this work resonates with, and engages an audience's humanity.

David McAllister (Artistic Director of the Australian Ballet), has said of the work- *"I was lucky enough to see Lisa's Lake which was an extraordinary piece that was danced in a huge pool of water and made for a visceral and theatrical time in the theatre. Her ability to manipulate mood and relationships between the dancers was inspiring and their gutsiness to perform for over an hour sopping wet made for a wonderful time in the theatre."*

Lake is an ambitious production with an element of risk to excite a broad range of dance and theatre goers. I hope that this work captivates an audience and they enjoy a quality dance theatre work with emotionally strong choreography and impactful theatricality.

Pre – Performance Viewing

Activity #1 Power Play

Aim: To introduce and explore the themes of human relationships and power struggles represented in *Lake*.

Lake explores the dynamics of ‘destruction and renewal’ through the physical, internal, metaphoric and psychic interactions between two people in an intimate relationship.

Lisa Wilson used a number of choreographic strategies to stimulate ideas and generate movement and dance material that would eventually become *Lake*. The following tasks are key examples used in her development process adapted here for you to explore and make into your own dance works.

Feeling Trapped?

Have you ever felt trapped and wanted to escape – a relationship, social situation, home, the classroom, bad weather?

Form pairs.

Share your stories of feeling trapped with your partner.

Make 2 physical actions each that describe your emotional and physical experiences of being trapped and desire to escape.

Link the actions together.

Refine the transitions between the actions.

Add a starting and a finishing point.

Perform as a short solo piece or as a duet for the class.

Extension:

Form small groups.

Make a physical tableau entitled ‘trapped’.

Re-form into a tableau entitled ‘escaping’.

Link the two tableau together shifting from trapped to escaping and visa versa.

Explore & Include the cause of being trapped in the sequence – who or what are you escaping from?

Extend the sequence through improvised movement tracing the journey from trapping, being trapped to escaping.

Present & Discuss the interpretation of the themes and stories emerging from the moving tableau sequences.

Trapped In Conversations

Form pairs.

Improvise & Explore 'trapping and escaping' from your partner.

Swap roles – one of you is the 'trapper' and the other 'escaper'.

Let the roles shift between you in free form.

Make a set phrase of movement based on your explorations – your phrase may include stillness and/or non-locomotor movements such as dodging, falling, pulling, turning, swaying, twisting etc.

Discuss & Decide who the two people are and the type of relationship they have - playful, caring or confrontational?

Communicate a conversation between the two characters that captures their relationship through the set phrase.

Manipulate & Pace the dynamic qualities of your set phrase.

Variation #1 – explore movement conversation, playfully exploring trapping and trapped, being hunted and caught ('caged') and caging partners body parts.

Variation #2 – abstract the movement conversation on chairs (as above) with the idea of playfulness gone so it becomes more physical and confrontational.

Present & Discuss the choreography choices made by the duets with the class.

Reflection:

How successful were you and your partner in communicating your intention to an audience?

If you were going to develop this work further what would you do next/differently?

Give an example of another pairs work you felt clearly communicated intention.

Why were they successful?

Performance viewing tasks:

Write down 5 or more words/phrases to describe each of the characters in *Lake* and their relationships with each other.

Note their differences and similarities.

Consider movement qualities, body actions, expression, gender, role-play and shifting power relationships.

App clip viewing & reflection tasks:

Trapping, trapped and escaping conversations are a key motifs in *Lake's* representation of 'destruction and renewal' .

Watch the following series of selected video clips from a performance of *Lake*:

Clip #1: 6.08-7.05 (playful trapping)

Clip #2: 50.20-51.22 (hunting and caging in conflict)

Discuss the relationship between Lisa Wilson's choreographic tasks exploring 'trapped', 'trapping' and 'escaping' and their execution in the performance setting by the dancers.

Compare & Contrast the representation of 'playful trapping' sequences and 'hunting and caging in conflict' sequences.

How has the choreography been developed and affected by incorporating specific production and narrative elements?

Consider

Set

Use of space

Lighting

Video projection

Sound & Music

Costume

Story & Character

Extension:

Form pairs.

Review the clips again together.

Select & Replicate one or more of the choreographic devices used in the sequence/s.

Explore full expanse of space and include falling, running, diving through and into movements.

Remember to work within your body's capabilities and limitations.

Add another movement of your own (a new body action or one developed by you/group in the exploration tasks).

Rehearse & Present the scene to the class for comment and discussion on your replication and interpretation of Lisa Wilson's performance choreography.

Reflection:

What did you learn about Lisa Wilson's choreographic choices through attempting to replicate them?

What did you learn about your body's capabilities and limitations?

What did you learn about the dancers technical skills in being able to execute the selected choreography successfully in performance?

Activity #2 Breaking Surfaces

Aim: To explore and develop skills in dance making and performance based on *Lake's* examination of the internal and external dynamics in relationships.

We also wanted to use the idea of breaking the surface tension of a relationship and dredging up what lay beneath.

Lisa Wilson

What is your understanding of the expression 'breaking the surface tension'?

Google the term 'surface tension'.

http://labman.phys.utk.edu/phys221/modules/m9/surface_tension.htm

Google the expression 'bubbles to the surface'.

Research the relationship between 'surface tension' and bubbles in physics.

<http://hyperphysics.phy-astr.gsu.edu/hbase/surten2.html>

The surface tension of water provides the necessary wall tension for the formation of bubbles in water. The tendency to minimize that wall tension pulls the bubbles into spherical shape.

La Places' Law

Lisa Wilson's reference to surface tension becomes a metaphor for the unspoken conflicts in a relationship that lie beneath the surface.

Can you think of any situations when an unresolved or undisclosed conflict between friends or family members caused 'bubbles' of conflict to be revealed? What happened?

Performance viewing tasks:

What is the significance of the bubbles scene in *Lake* ?

Why does the MAN burst the bubbles? What does his action reveal about the couple's relationship? Him?

App clip viewing & reflection tasks:

Watch the following clip:

Clip #3: 24.47-26.47 (bubble solo into duet)

Discuss the mood of the scene.

Compare & Contrast the body actions and expressive intentions of the MAN & WOMAN.

Describe the choreographic choices that distinguish and give emphasis to their contrasting intentions.

What is the music doing?

Ghosting

Ghost: a spirit
the soul
a spirit appearing after death
one who does another's work
a faint or false appearance
a duplicated image

Chambers English Dictionary

What is your understanding of the expression 'to haunt like a ghost'?

Performance viewing task:

Who is haunting who in *Lake*?

Who is the SPIRIT? Is she more connected to the WOMAN or MAN, both or neither?

Why is the SPIRIT played by a female and not a male dancer?

Imagine the SPIRIT performed by a male dancer. How would it change the narrative?

Ghosting as a choreographic structure is one of the strategies used by Lisa Wilson to explore 'a constantly shifting quest for balance'. Here is one of her improvisation tasks for you to explore and create a dance work:

Form pairs, A & B.

A stands in front B as the leader.

B stands behind A as the follower or 'ghost'.

A/leader improvises movement, B/follower attempts to mirror A's movements.

Move slowly – remember you are not trying to trick or outwit each other!

Begin with simple, easy movements that can become more complex as you continue on your journey.

Incorporate legs, floor work, levels, directions etc.

Play with changes in the dynamics – time, use of space, energy.

Don't make eye contact with your partner!

Follower/ghost aims to make movements seamless and in unison with the leader.

Extension:

Leader devises a set sequence and teaches follower the sequence so that they can repeat it.

Leader repeats the sequence and follower replicates several times.

Follower devises 'break out' moments - select movements to manipulate, using choreographic devises such as repetition, accumulation, and retrograde to give emphasis.

Keep the 'break out' moments short, and have them reconnect with the leader's movements.

Rehearse & Present your ghosting sequence to the class.

Reflection:

What does the ghost follower reveal about the leader?

What is the effect of having the leader unaware of the ghost's presence?

Who has the power in the sequence – the follower or leader or is power unfixed and constantly shifting?

Performance viewing tasks:

Give an example from *Lake* of ghosting.

App clip viewing & reflection task:

Watch the following clips:

Clip #4: 13.00 -15.00

Clip #5: 32.05-34.05

Describe in detail the choreographic devises and body actions used.

Where is the 'break out' moment?

What technical skills do the dancers employ to achieve both the unison and contrasting actions?

Activity #3 Memory and Place

Aim: To explore place and memory as a stimuli for dance imagery, narrative and choreography.

Memories and stories about place offer up unlimited sources and inspiration possibilities for narrative in dance.

Lisa Wilson explores 'place as a dimension of memory' in *Lake*.

Describe a remembered or imagined place or a landscape or some other kind of environment that has special significance for you.

What time of day is it?

What is the weather?

Rural or city?

Inside or outside?

Is it hot or cold?

Is it a pleasant place or not?

What can you hear? See? Smell?

How do you feel about this place? Do belong here? Are you a stranger?

Write & Read aloud a letter to a friend describing this place.

Collect an image/object that would be in this place.

Sketch out the feeling of being in this place on a piece of paper.

Develop this sketch into a shape that captures the feeling of the place.

Transfer the shape to the floor as the basis for a floor pattern pathway.

Create a solo movement sequence using the floor pattern.

Let the qualities of the movements be influenced by the qualities of your memories of the place, real or imagined.

Incorporate the image/object into the sequence.

Include your written text or another piece of text (poem, prose etc) as stimulus for the choreography or as spoken word in the dance.

Extension:

Some one enters the place – casually, violently, accidentally, secretly?

Who are they – a friend, enemy, stranger, ghost?

Do you leave, stay or hide from view? Do you see them?

Develop the scene into a duet.

Performance viewing task:

Who belongs to the lake and who does not?

Why does *Lake* open with the SPIRIT solo?

How is 'belonging' and 'not belonging' to place enacted in *Lake*? **Give** examples from the performance that explore 'belonging' and 'not belonging' through the selected choreography.

Memory Objects

Lisa Wilson extends her theme of entrapment and freedom to include using the body as equipment. Here is one of her choreographic tasks from *Lake*:

Choose an object or piece of equipment that people use, for example camping equipment, a car, clothes etc.

Form pairs, decide who is going to be the object/equipment and who is going to be the person.

Create a sequence of pedestrian movement that uses inanimate object/equipment as intended. For example, pitching a tent.

Using this sequence as a base, explore the idea that the object/equipment is trying to restrict or trap the person.

Find moments when the object/equipment shift between being inanimate and animated.

App clip viewing & reflection task:

Watch the following clip:

Clip #6: 15.05-21.02

List all the objects the SPIRIT transforms into. Which was your favourite? Why?

Discuss the dynamics of the literal representation of objects through body formations.

Lakes, Love & Isolation

Lake was inspired by a range of sources as starting points including a performance of *Swan Lake* by the Queensland Ballet.

Research the history and performance of Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake* (1985).

Watch a filmed performance of the ballet.

Post - performance reflection:

What connections can you draw between *Lake* and *Swan Lake*? Refer to the Q&A interview with Lisa Wilson.

How is love represented in *Lake*? **Describe** a moment of love between the characters. How was this moment conveyed through the choreographic choices? **Describe** the body actions of the dancers.

Extension:

Compare & Contrast the treatment of love, relationships and isolation in *Swan Lake* with *Lake's* representation of these themes in the context of contemporary values and social behaviours between men and women.

Post-Performance Viewing

Activity #1 Staging *Lake*

Aim: To be able to understand, respond and appreciate *Lake's* production elements and the role of the creative team in the devising and performance process.

The Dramaturge

Jennifer Flowers is the dramaturge for *Lake*.

Research the role of the dramaturge in the creation of new performance works:

<http://www.princeton.edu/~achaney/tmve/wiki100k/docs/Dramaturge.html>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FbIdeUctkF4>

List 3 main tasks of a dramaturge.

Discuss why you think a dramaturge was part of the devising process for *Lake*?

Post-performance reflection:

Give an example from the production where the role of a dramaturge is evident in *Lake*. **Refer** to the Q& A with Lisa Wilson.

Consider

Narrative structure – how are links between phrases organized in the dance to assist in the storytelling?

Genre – what are some of stylistic elements and historical influences in the dance?

Cultural & Social context – what are the connections between key movement motifs, subject matter, social and cultural influences?

The Dancers Craft

What challenges do you think the dancers face when performing *Lake*?

Consider the principles of safe dance practice, the causes and prevention of injury whilst moving in water.

List all the skill competencies demonstrated by the dancers in the performance.

Give examples from the performance with reference to specific sequences (refer to the video clips also as a reflection tool).

Consider

Strength

Flexibility

Endurance

Energy
Agility
Co-ordination
Balance
Control
Alignment
Placement
Expression
Character Interpretation
Consistency
Focus
Commitment
Communication

Extension:

Research the work of Timothy Ohl

<http://chunkymove.com.au/The-Company/Current-Performers/Timothy-Ohl.aspx>

[http://www.lucyguerininc.com/about/Timothy Ohl](http://www.lucyguerininc.com/about/Timothy_Ohl)

Time Waits For An Old Man vimeo clip

<https://vimeo.com/44973027>

Mix Tape clip

<http://www.chunkymove.com/Our-Works/Next-Move/Mix-Tape.aspx>

Research the work of Kristina Chan

<http://www.expressionsdancecompany.org.au/our-work/solo-festival-of-dance/kristina-chan/>

[http://www.lucyguerininc.com/about/Kristina Chan](http://www.lucyguerininc.com/about/Kristina_Chan)

Ausdance NSW Residency

<https://vimeo.com/52816050>

On Vimeo

<https://vimeo.com/user8524756>

Research the work of Hsin-Ju Chiu

<http://brisbanedanceartistshub.wordpress.com/pro-dance-classes-brisbane-2/about-hsin-ju/>

Drawing on your research of the cast, **discuss** how much you think the individual dancers' training, background and experience may have influenced their particular movement qualities and abilities to interpret and communicate the choreographer's ideas in *Lake*.

Post-performance reflection:

Whose work did you most enjoy in *Lake*?

Give 3 reasons why you liked this dancer's work with specific reference to how they interpreted and performed their role.

Do you think the choreography suits their level of skill and movement style? Why?

Extension:

The dancers in *Lake* are from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Do you think this is a significant choice by the choreographer in wanting to represent a broader more diverse range of cultural experiences? Why/why not?

The Designer

Research the work Bruce McKinven

<http://dancenorth.com.au/?p=1976>

http://www.operaq.com.au/artist-details/artist/bruce_mckinven

Post-performance reflection:

How did the use of video projections contribute to the storytelling?

How did the real elements – water, trees, camping chairs, torch, newspaper - work in combination with the productions abstract elements?

The Composer

Research the work of composer Matt Cornell

<http://www.themattmosphere.com/themattmosphere/MattCornell.html>

<http://www.ausdancensw.com.au/BioMattCornell/1443/2/3/0/0/>

<http://www.pact.net.au/2013/04/matt-cornell/>

Post-performance reflection:

How did the sound and music contribute to the overall mood of the piece?

Give an example of two contrasting moods in the performance that were achieved through the affective use of sound/music.

Lighting Designer

Research the work of Jason Glenwright

<http://www.jasonglenwright.com/>

Post-performance reflection:

Describe a key moment in the performance where lighting was critical in achieving dramatic affect.

Activity #2 In and Out of Water

Aim: To be able to create and perform a dance or drama work inspired by *Lake*.

Water is the driving force in nature.

Leonardo da Vinci

Nature offers up unlimited sources and inspiration possibilities for imagery in dance.

It is often understood that if there is no water in an environment there can be no life. In contemporary human evolutionary theory it is strongly argued human beings evolved from the sea.

Why do you think people like to live near water? Why do people often like to take their holidays near bodies of water – rivers, lakes, seaside and coastal areas?

Describe the last time you visited a water location.

Have you ever been camping? Where did you go? Who did you go with – family, friends, the school? What did you enjoy/not enjoy about camping?

Post-performance reflection:

Why have the couple come to the lake?

App clip viewing reflection task:

Watch the following clip:

Clip #7: 3.25-5.30

Describe the interaction between the couple.

How does the naturalistic every day movement work in the piece?

Imagine the piece if you took away the movement. How would it work as a piece of naturalistic theatre?

Write a short dialogue exchange between the couple. What does she say? What does he say in return? And so on.

Re-present & perform the scene as a naturalistic drama.

Reflection:

Discuss the differences and similarities between drama and dance performance.

How successfully do you think *Lake* combines drama narrative elements with choreographed dance movement structures?

Natural Instincts

Research water or another natural element or feature that interests you – fire, oxygen, mountains, rivers, islands, waterfalls, deserts, bush scrub, rainforests etc.

Collect images of your natural element or feature.

Choose one (or two) images to focus on.

How do they make you feel? What do you think about when you look at them?

Do any of them make you think of something else?

Allow stories to arise from the image/s.

Use the image/s as a starting point for a creative movement improvisation.

Make a short solo dance about your selected image/theme with a beginning, middle, and end.

Design clear movements and gestures to express your images, thoughts and feelings.

Develop a clear beginning, middle, and end.

Present to the class for feedback and discussion.

Extension:

Add music/sound that complements (or contrasts) the mood.

Incorporate the image as an object or video projection.

Reflection:

Discuss the use of imagery from nature as a stimuli source for dance making.

What are the challenges of making a work that moves beyond literal references to a more in depth examination of the 'invisible' aspects of a natural setting/element?

How successful were you in going beyond the 'visible' to reveal hidden perspectives in your piece?

Emotional Drowning

One of the strong images I went into this development phase with was – emotional drowning, or drowning from the inside.

Lisa Wilson

What is your understanding of the phrase 'emotional drowning, or drowning from the inside'?

How does the analogy of drowning equate to *Lake's* interest in 'submerged fears', and 'incurable conflicts' in human relationships? **Give** an example of a choreographic moment in the work where you think this is most evident.

Lisa Wilson describes the use of 'water as a metaphor for a couple's emotions'.

What is your understanding of the term metaphor?

What does the water symbolise and tell us about the couple's relationship in *Lake*?

How does the use of water make 'visible' what remains unspoken and 'invisible' to the couple?

Describe how you think the water on stage and the video projection of the lake assist the audience in making these key thematic links in the work?

Here is one of Lisa Wilson's choreographic tasks to explore the movement of water as a stimulus for physical movement:

Form duos/trios/groups (or solo).

Explore currents running through different parts of the body.

Explore the effect of these currents on the body and the idea of energy currents/ripples radiating from movement.

Use this same imagery to form into groups.

App clip viewing and reflection task:

Watch following clip:

Clip #8: 40.00 -41.00

Describe what is happening in this scene.

Discuss the shift from the focus on the visibly drowned SPIRIT, to her watching the MAN perform CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) on an invisible 'missing' body. What is the significance of this shift with reference to the choreographer's interest in the physiological effects of drowning ('emotional drowning') as opposed to the literal effects?

Extension:

Research CPR

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cardiopulmonary_resuscitation

<http://www.ambulance.nsw.gov.au/Community-Info/First-Aid/CPR.html>

<http://depts.washington.edu/learncpr/quickcpr.html>

Select & Replicate one or more of the CPR actions as choreography for a movement improvisation sequence.

Form pairs.

Explore the selected actions of CPR on different body parts, or trying to resuscitate parts of someone's body.

Post-performance reflection:

Imagine *Lake* if you took away the water. How would it change the work?

Activity #3 Choreography Consequences

Aim: To be able to analyse and interpret the choreographer's process and to be able to identify key choreographic structures used in *Lake*.

The Choreographer's Process & Vision

Research the work of *Lake's* director and choreographer Lisa Wilson.
<http://www.lisawilson.com.au/>

Read her Q&A interview.

I didn't enter this development period with fixed ideas or a finished product in mind, far from it. I came in with a whole list of images, thoughts, task ideas and questions that we began investigating.

Lisa Wilson

Discuss her approach to research and devising.

What are her main concerns and priorities when making a new work?

List 3 key ideas that describe her process for making *Lake*.

What questions does she ask?

Give direct quotes from the Q & A to support your responses.

Post-performance reflection:

Compare & Contrast Lisa Wilson's vision and various critics responses to *Lake* quoted in the Q & A with your experience of seeing the production.

How did you feel at the end of the performance?

How did the audience respond?

What is your understanding of the final scene?

Write/Send a tweet articulating your opinion of *Lake* to your tweet followers/communities.

List 3 things you liked about the performance.

Was there anything you didn't like or understand in the work?

What would you change if you had choreographed *Lake*?

Consider in your responses, subject matter, choreography, stylistic choices and production design.

Drawing on your opinions of the production

Write a 150 word letter or email to Lisa Wilson outlining your views on her directorial and choreographic approach.

OR

Imagine you are a dance critic for a major newspaper/online publication/blog

Write a 250 word review of the production.

Will you recommend people see *Lake*? Why/why not?

OR

Write a 150 word review of the production for publication in your school/classroom magazine/blog.

Collapsed bodies

I think dredging up what becomes stagnant in relationships is something many people can relate to, even in a small way.

Lisa Wilson

App clip viewing and reflection task:

Watch following clip:

Clip #9: 51.40-54.30 (end of 'fight' and into collapsed bodies)

Write down in detail all the choreographic strategies used in this sequence.

How does the motif of 'collapsed bodies' contribute to the choreographer's 'overarching idea of destruction and renewal' in *Lake*?

Explore Lisa Wilson's 'collapsed bodies' choreography in trios/small groups:

Start in collapsed intertwined body position with limbs of 3 people.

Slowly merge and shift as one.

Work with images of lifting, pulling, dragging and finally pulling apart.

Extension:

Review all the video clips (#1-#9).

Identify 3-5 key recurring motifs and choreographic structures in the work.

Reflection:

Describe Lisa Wilson's choreographic style in *Lake* in 3 words.

Drawing on your research, study of *Lake* and experience of her choreographic tasks

Write a 250 word appraisal of Lisa Wilson's work as a dance choreographer and director of merit.

How does her practice and vision contribute to the long-term growth, diversity and vibrancy of contemporary dance in Australia?

Compare & Contrast her work with another Australian choreographer of significance whose work you have also seen or studied.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Lisa Wilson

<http://www.lisawilson.com.au/>

http://www.lisawilson.com.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=46&Itemid=29

<http://www.sydneydancecompany.com/collaborators/lisa-wilson/>

Lake

Creative Development youtube clip

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMOV3ZzUxAE>

Reviews

<http://www.realtimearts.net/article/issue111/10833>

<http://www.danceaustralia.com.au/review/lake-choreographed-by-lisa-wilson>

<http://xsentertainme.wordpress.com/tag/lisa-wilson/>

Australian Contemporary Dance

Expressions Dance Company

<http://www.expressionsdancecompany.org.au/>

Zaimon Vilmanis (*Forgotten Interlude* clip)

<http://www.ausdanceqld.org.au/index.cfm?contentID=2&categoryID=5&artistID=11>

Chunky Move

<http://www.chunkymove.com/>

Meryl Tannkard (*Black Swan* clip)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KqvLTXqFtnE>

Lucy Guerin & Inc (*Weather* clip)

<http://www.abc.net.au/arts/stories/s3613379.htm>

<http://www.lucyguerininc.com/>

Bangarra Dance Theatre

<http://www.bangarra.com.au/>

Force Majeure

<http://www.forcemajeure.com.au/>

Comparative Texts

Queensland Ballet, *Swan Lake* (2010), trailer
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uvGm2Fmsxy4>

Pina Bausch's Fun clip from *Pina* 3D film by Win Wenders
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kV2mPO5Ckeg>

The Shape of Water, film
Cordelia Beresford
<https://vimeo.com/17059235>

Devised & Directed by Lisa Wilson

With Timothy Ohl
Kristina Chan
Hsin-Ju Chiu

Composed by Matt Cornell
Dramaturge Jennifer Flowers
Design Bruce McKinven
Lighting Design Jason Glenwright
Video Producer Chris Golsby

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