



ACE dance and music

Switch marketing pack

Contact: Nicky Everett // Marketing Co-ordinator // 07855 840822 // nicky@theliftcreativeservices.com

Running Times

'Switch': 30 minutes // Interval: 15 minutes // 'Listen': 30 minutes

Two separate pieces with a fifteen minute interval

Based in Digbeth, Birmingham ACE combine captivating & energetic contemporary dance with African/Caribbean movement style, layering rousing music scores & media techniques, creating an entertaining & enriching experience appealing to all.

Pushing the boundaries of performance, ACE use music technology & traditional genres to create accessible & exciting dance experiences, complimented by outreach work engaging thousands of people annually.

Artistic Director: Gail Parmel

Musical Director: Ian Parmel

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YEoluU3MkDE> – trailer link!

Switch copy

Change, choice, break the mould, embody new rituals and live again.

Switch draws inspiration from ancient practices and their relevance to our lives now. Dancing from the heart, ACE will pull energy from its oldest, purest source and transform it into something fresh, new and pulsating - flipping on its head the notion of tradition and the ancient.

Set in a black and white space, this is an exciting new collaborative work by ACE's directors Gail and Ian Parmel with choreographers Douglas Thorpe (ex Phoenix Dance Company) and Andile Sotiya. Switch promises to be an exciting blend of sophisticated dance, music and visuals, accompanied by a robust and agile cast of six international and UK based dancers.

Watch ACE for a night of full-on dance to make you think and feel.

Information about the double bill called 'Switch'

'Switch,' was created this summer for touring during autumn 2009 and spring 2010. For this project ACE have worked in collaboration with choreographers Dougie Thorpe and Andile Sotiya, to create a production with fresh energy and diverse dance styles. ACE dance and music is known for creating work with African and Caribbean movement influences: low body stance, isolation and ancient practices. This is evident in 'Switch' - alongside powerful Japanese video projections and the choreographers' and international dancers' range of styles, experiences and ideas thrown into the mix.

'Switch'

Choreographed by Artistic Director Gail Parmel and dancers // Movement collaboration by Andile Sotiya

Switch is a pure movement piece exploring the transference of energy from one vessel to another, cause and effect and movement within boundaries. Dancers form a circuit board; charging from a power source and passing on energy. In contrast to 'Listen' this piece is more about 'moving' than 'thinking.'

'Listen'

Choreographed by Artistic Director Gail Parmel and Dougie Thorpe

'Listen' is about modern day war and the effect that this has on the psyche. Dancers explore 'post-traumatic stress, living with the memories and experience of war and conflict. The impression that witnessing the horrors of war has on your life, trying to put the pieces back together while your memories drag you back into the past. This piece explores relationship breakdown and power struggles between men and women, reflecting the emotional landscape of a lover leaving to go to war and returning a changed person. The piece uses a range of techniques, fast and precise staccato phrases, in contrast with eastern style, ultra controlled, haunting, movement and mime, all designed to disarm and unsettle the audience.

Dancers: Sade Alleyne, Anna Finkel, Theo Lowe, Yu Yu Rau, Stephen Wright, Elena Zaino **Apprentice:** Laura Vanhulle **Team:** Gail and Ian Parmel (Directors), Sabra Khan (Development), Megan Nelsey (Project Management), Nicky Everett (Marketing), Emma Jane Benning (Education) Charlotte Gregory (Administration), Koko *Mathibela* (Finance).

Visual Stage Design (projections): Akihiko Kaneko **Music:** Ian Parmel in collaboration with: Peter Maxwell, Junior Willocks, Benjamin George **Lighting:** Heidi Riley **Stage Design:** Claire Witcombe **Costumes:** Selina Nightingale **Technician:** Simon Broadbridge AKA Fuzzy **Photography:** Brian Slater **Graphic and web design:** The Lift Creative Services **DVD and trailer:** Hans De Kretser Associates

Audience Feedback from 'Switch'

"Moving and powerful." // "Brilliant performance, the dancers were physically and emotionally expressive." // "The piece was exciting choreographically and creatively, and the physicality of the work was outstanding – an explosive and intense physical and visual experience!" // "The rawest company I have ever seen! 10/10" // "Strong, powerful, even aggressive movement, passionate at moments... beautiful dancers." // "Amazed at the versatility, technique, timing, balance and overall talent of the dancers." // "Very polished, professional, integrous!... Not gimmicky." // "Powerful, strong, a very forceful and emotive, determined group of dancers." // Dynamic, well choreographed, passionate, really enjoyed it. 9/10"

ACE dance and music reviews // most recent in first!

- "With a stylistic mix that stretches from Africa, through the Caribbean and Europe and across to Japan, Skin marks a fresh departure for this bold Birmingham outfit...another step forward for a company on the edge of breaking into the big league." **Keith Watson, Metro, Skin, 2008**
- "Once regarded as simply a black dance company, ACE dance and music is evolving from its African roots into an international arena in this ambitious and impressive project... Dancers perform with style and discipline... Technical ability and sheer physicality... Exhilarating to watch." **5 star review, Terry Grimley, Birmingham Post, Skin 2008**
- "Letlalo (meaning Skin) has a warm, vibrant resonance to it, full of emotion and expression, and the dancers really look as if it is part of them, not just executing the steps. It is energetic and magical." **The Stage, Skin 2008**
- "Dancing at full speed from one of the UK's brightest young companies, with superb music to match." **Article 19**
- It made me want to leap out of my seat and dance...the dancers moved with such ease and flexibility. The atmosphere was almost electric. It was so alive and so visual. I was completely speechless and so was everyone around me! The performance really made me think about my skin and what it means, and what it tells the world around us. Overall I thought it was a 10 out of 10 performance and a night I'll never forget!" **Norwich Evening News**
- "Where 'Blind Trip' is dance as conflict, 'Letlalo' is dance as incantation. Together they create a fascinating journey beneath the skin we are individually and collectively in." **Claire Boot, Whatsonstage Midlands**
- "I enjoyed both performances enormously – and indeed the Afro-fusion! The technical skills, agility and timing were outstanding, and I am sure your tour will be a huge success. I look forward to hearing about ACE going from strength to strength." **Jeremy Hunt MP Shadow Culture Secretary**
- "ACE Dance's performance at the Purcell Room on the South Bank was great. The six dancers came from South Africa, Italy and the UK, and they performed two pieces, one choreographed by a Japanese choreographer, the other by an African. I was hugely impressed by the taut control of the first half of the show which contrasted vividly with the energy and the pace of the second half..." **Previous Minister of Culture Margaret Hodge**
- This energetic performance of dance aims to examine and celebrate the lives of women. The six female artists look more like athletes than dancers - strong rather than sylph-like, and extremely powerful. ACE mixes African, Caribbean and contemporary dance and its style is so robust and excitingly physical that it is a wonder the dancers are not covered in bruises by the end. **Their control is amazing. They dance alone, in pairs and intricately en masse. Lifts, falls, counterbalances and lunges are used to great effect and are mixed with impressive acrobatic leaps and turns, reminiscent of capoeira.** The moves are set to Ian Parmel and Andy Garbi's varied music, combining the traditional and modern. Pure noise, experimental sound and club beats mingle with strings, while live steel pan blends with recorded viola. Real's three acts are choreographed by three different practitioners. In Act I, choreographed by Andile Sotiya and Gail Parmel, the dancers wear earth-toned slip dresses as they convey women's traditional roles of carers and providers. Parmel also devised Act II in which the women are dehumanised in shapeless shifts and the action makes for uneasy viewing with confrontational scenes of violence and abuse. The final act, by Robert Moses, sees them in black net hooped skirts and ribbed halter tops. Now their layers are stripped away to show the strength and beauty beneath the glamour. **The Stage, 19 October 2005**
- Real is an arresting fusion of dance and music, and boy, do these particular women work hard. **Liz Arroton, The Guardian: Saturday October 22, 2005**
- "There's no art to find the mind's construction in the face." Shakespeare observed this with some melancholy, but ACE dance and music explore this reality with rhythm and grace. The face now is the face of woman, with three choreographers (Gail Parmel, Andile Sotiya, Robert Moses) evoking the suppression, oppression, stresses and pains as well as the strength, stamina, power and intelligence which may lie behind a painted face. The vocabulary is African and Caribbean and the soundtrack from Ian Parmel and Andy Garbi vibrantly atmospheric. What is revealed might be the inner life of Cleopatra or Josephine Baker. **Bill Harpe**
- 'Upfront style...plenty of energy' **The Independent**
- 'Energetic delirium...sends us home on a high' **The Guardian**
- 'Inspirational...Music and dance to elevate the soul' **The Birmingham Post**
- 'This physically demanding dance, characterised by an explosive use of rhythm, is an extraordinary sight.' **Metro**
- 'A nostalgia fest with outrageous perms and feather boas...the most exhilarating stretch of the evening is a 1980s break-dance now given a Lara Croft-like martial arts gloss...' **The Birmingham Post**

ACE dance and music sample press release

presents 'SWITCH' – an evening of two distinct pieces touring October November 2009

ACE Dance and Music combines energetic contemporary choreography with African/Caribbean movement style, rousing musical scores and mixed media techniques, including video projection, to create a truly entertaining experience. The company's inspirational new show, which features two distinct dance pieces, is titled '**SWITCH**' and tours the UK in October and November. The two individual pieces are titled '**Switch**' and '**Listen**', both are new works by **ACE's** founder co-directors, **Gail** and **Ian Parmel** on which they've worked with movement collaborator **Andile Sotiya ('Switch')** and fast rising choreographer **Douglas Thorpe ('Listen')**.

'**Switch**' is a pure movement piece which explores the transfer of energy from one vessel to another; set in a striking monochrome space, dancers form a circuit board, charging from a power source and passing on energy. '**Listen**' is a modern day muse on war and the effect it can have on the human psyche. Dancers explore aspects of post-traumatic stress, living with the experiences of war and the difficulty of trying to balance and manage a normal life with the horror of flashback.

Both **Sotiya** and **Thorpe** are ex-Phoenix Dance Company; Thorpe recently choreographed a new piece, 'Beast', for the company which will tour in 2010. Each piece runs for 30 minutes; there will be a 15 minute interval at each venue. '**SWITCH**' is performed by **Sade Alleyne, Anna Finkel, Theo Lowe, Yu Yu Rau, Stephen Wright, Elena Zaino, Laura Vanhulle**.

Watch the **SWITCH** trailer on:-<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YEoluU3MkDE>

SWITCH tour dates:

October 12 th	Durham, Greenfield Arts Centre	01325 379 048	www.greenfield.durham.sch.uk
October 13 th	Darlington Arts Centre	01325 348 843	www.darlington.gov.uk
October 16 th and 17 th	Barnsley Civic Theatre	0845 180 0363	www.barnsleycivic.co.uk
October 28 th and 29 th	East London, Rich Mix	020 7613 7498	www.richmix.org.uk
November 4 th	Plough Arts Centre	01805 624 624	www.plough-arts.org
November 5 th	Croydon ClockTower	020 8253 1030	www.croydonclocktower.org.uk
November 6 th	Birmingham Drum	0121 333 2444	www.birminghamdrumcentre.co.uk
November 7 th	Cleethorpes, Lindsey School and Community Arts College		www.tlsarts.co.uk
November 12 th	Kendal, Brewery Arts Centre	01539 725 133	www.breweryarts.co.uk



Audience feedback from 'Switch'

Moving and powerful...the dancers were physically and emotionally expressive...the piece was exciting choreographically and creatively and the physicality of the work was outstanding...an explosive and intense physical and visual experience...the rawest company I have ever seen!...strong, power, passionate, beautiful...very polished, professional...dynamic, well choreographed, I loved it...

BIOGRAPHIES:



Artistic Director GAIL PARMEL is a graduate of Northern School of Contemporary Dance and brings the influences of her Antiguan heritage and contemporary training to her work. Gail joined Kokuma Dance Theatre in 1992, worked with Badejo Arts and founded **ACE dance and music** with her husband, **Ian**, in 1996. **Gail** has choreographed eight successful touring productions for **ACE: The Path, Colours Within, Solitude or Sanctuary, 3 Shades, En-Trance, REAL, Skin and most recently Switch**. She has researched and travelled extensively throughout Europe, the Caribbean and Africa; she participated in the Black Choreographic Initiative and has worked with Batanai, the national dance company of Zimbabwe. **Gail** continues to build on her skills and expertise as a performer and choreographer through strategic research and choreographic collaborations with artists such as; Douglas Thorpe, Vincent Mantsoe and Koffi Koko



Director IAN PARMEL was born into a family of musicians and began drumming and playing steelpan at the age of seven in his homeland, Trinidad and Tobago. He came to England in 1988 to teach steelpan music and joined Kokuma Dance Company in 1991. He performed with and composed music for companies such as Badejo Arts, Brummalata, Black Voices, Sampad and Pan Project before co-founding **ACE dance and music** with Gail. As a composer Ian has created and directed music for all of **ACE's** eight productions; he has performed as an individual practitioner around the world and played with numerous international practitioners. He has also introduced the company to new ways of creating music which encompass both traditional and modern styles. He continues to explore digital science within the music arena.