

RUSHES REVIEWS/MEDIA 2018

NEW ZEALAND FESTIVAL

CIRCA THEATRE: CIRCA 1, CIRCA 2, REHEARSAL ROOMS, DRESSING ROOMS AND GREEN ROOM

23 FEBRUARY - 5 MARCH, 2018



REVIEWS

THEATREVIEW, 24 FEB 2018

Reviewed by Michael Gilchrist

AN EXPERIENCE NOT TO BE MISSED

PRINT VERSION



RUSHES

Direction: Malia Johnston
Live music: Eden Mulholland
Video art and film: Rowan Pierce
Set design: John Verryt
Lighting: Jo Kilgour
Graphic design: Ian Hammond

at Circa Theatre, 1 Taranaki St, Waterfront, Wellington
From 23 Feb 2018 to 5 Mar 2018
[1 hr 15 mins]

Reviewed by Michael Gilchrist, 24 Feb 2018

Billed as live music gig meets art gallery meets theatre, dance and film, *Rushes* is nowhere near as disparate as that description seems to suggest. Rather it is an innovative, exciting and wonderfully involving way to experience contemporary and interpretive dance.

With well over 30 performers, this production spreads itself over numerous spaces in a completely made-over Circa Theatre. For about 80 minutes the audience moves at will through these spaces as if through the interior of a human body, encountering all the emotional dramas, shifting moods and restless connections of feeling that occupy us and define our lives. There are new physical transformations and audio visual settings at each point, while the liminal and transitional spaces are also pierced, inhabited and transformed. Recordings made by the performers in other places and other times – as well as other surprises – await the viewer through peepholes.

Whether concerning the dancers or the body of the theatre, the inside is constantly turning out and the outside being taken back in, with the body shifting, in whole or in part, between opacity and transparency. Sometimes it is an armoured, cruelly isolating barrier, sometimes a silky vehicle of expression and community.

One of the most potent spaces has a couple standing together on a column within another column. That outer column is half lit, half transparent gauze around which we the audience stand, while those inside respond to each other in a world of difficulty, somewhere between publicity and intimacy. Hard to describe, equally hard to forget.

In another room, laser lights create structures of light and shadow around which the dancers move with utmost seriousness, recognising that in the world of feeling the most intangible elements can have the most concrete consequences.

In a connecting space, a lone performer may appear as a moving expressionist sculpture, her face a mask one moment, the image of a tortured soul the next. In the climax of the show, the heart of the building becomes the site of an all-absorbing, common struggle.

Despite the diversity of its spaces, this is a very unified production. The audio-visual design by Rowan Pierce and the original music and live performance led by Eden Mulholland are exceptionally good at supporting the dancers, directed by Malia Johnson. John Verryt and Morgan Whitfield provide the very successful set and lighting design respectively. All the performers show outstanding commitment, concentration and creativity.

If you are interested in contemporary and interpretive dance, this is an experience not to be missed.

For more production details, click on the title above. Go to [Home](#) page to see other Reviews, recent Comments and Forum postings (under Chat Back), and News.

Read online here:

<https://www.theatreview.org.nz/reviews/review.php?id=10869>

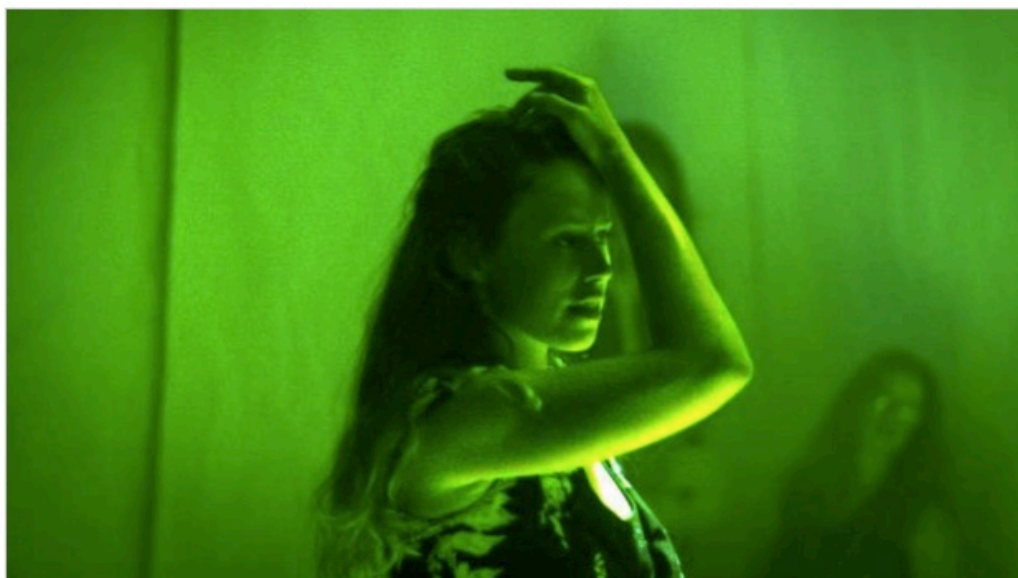
STUFF, 26 FEB 2018

Reviewed by Ewen Coleman

REVIEW: Rushes gives international festival shows a run for their money

EWEN COLEMAN

Last updated 13:52, February 26 2018



OLIVER CRAWFORD

Rushes turns the venue into a wonderland of light and images.

REVIEW: One of the great things about the bi-annual NZ Festival is the opportunity it gives local audiences to see innovative and exceptionally creative performance art from both New Zealand and overseas.

And the opening production at Circa Theatre, *Rushes*, a locally produced show, is a prime example of this and sits up there with many of the overseas productions often seen at festivals.

Created by Milla Johnston, Rowan Pierce and Eden Mulholland and directed by Milla Johnston, *Rushes* completely transforms Circa Theatre into something never seen before.



Read the full review here:

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/entertainment/arts/101772156/review-rushes-gives-international-festival-shows-a-run-for-their-money>

ART MURMURS, 1 MAR 2018

Reviewed by Corey Spence

Rushes

1/3/2018

0 Comments

Corey Spence



It's difficult to articulate how it felt waltzing into *Rushes*; seeing Circa's foyer covered wall-to-floor in crumpled white paper isn't something I anticipated. I'm inspired and intrigued watching the soft pink and purple LEDs refract and give an inviting, romantic glow. It feels like the show's already begun: *Rushes*, a living, breathing performance art exhibition, where each room is another part of its body.

I take a breath, and awestruck, I wade through a forest of bodies, some jerking, some calm, but all feeling the pulsing rhythm of the show's live music. We're encouraged by the ushers to take our time and return to rooms we pass through to watch how each performance piece evolves over time, yet the show and we are moving at different speeds. The performers move together, reaching terminal velocity, preparing to break through the atmosphere in the final ten minutes for the big, explosive bang of a final dance. And we're cruising past the art, drifting gently through the rooms, inspecting every crevice for secret little peepholes where we can stargaze into rooms and at performances we might otherwise miss.

I never really feel able to revisit previous rooms, however. *Rushes* constantly moves forward, and I feel myself following it subconsciously, never headed back to where I've already been. I'm sure others might've found circular paths, but I wanted to discover what was hid behind every centimetre of Circa. Everyone will experience *Rushes* differently, though I'm positive most will find swimming through the 'balloon womb' memorable. The audience became a performance piece squeezing into the tight passageway, navigating the inflated balloons (and perhaps condoms), and fumbling over one another.

Rushes is beautiful to watch; every single performer is controlled and moves with complete, defined reason. I peer through a hole in the wall to find a woman in a red

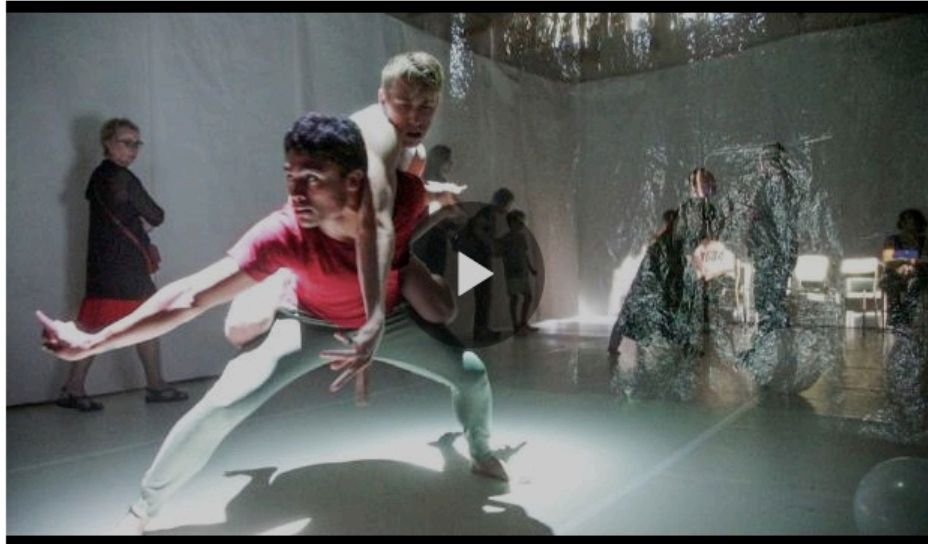
Read the full review here:

<http://www.artmurmurs.nz/theatre/rushes>

STUFF, 2 MAR 2018

Arts Fest : Rushes not bound by a single genre

Last updated 15:14, March 2 2018



MONIQUE FORD/STUFF

Circa Theatre has been transformed to create a maze of stages for the dance performance of Rushes. Thirty dancers from throughout New Zealand morph through the stages with high energy performances.

Stuff visual journalist **Monique Ford** headed along to Rushes - a New Zealand Festival show that apparently defies categorisation.

That is perhaps why it is described as art gallery meets theatre, dance, and film with 30 performers from around New Zealand.

It is also said to be a "choose your own adventure" and a "pick a pathway through a series of performance spaces that can be explored at will".



MONIQUE FORD/STUFF

Read the full story here:

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/entertainment/arts/101801310/arts-fest--ruses-not-bound-by-a-single-genre>

ARTS

Arts Festival review with Mark Amery

From **Jesse Mulligan, 1-4pm**, 2:27 pm on 1 March 2018

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On Friday Night, thousands of people gathered on Wellington's waterfront for the opening of the NZ Festival of the Arts - to watch a fleet of more than 20 waka, which followed the sea-paths of the legendary explorer Kupe, arrive in Wellington Harbour.

Mark Amery was there and will give us his critique.

Listen to the full interview here:

[https://www.radionz.co.nz/national/programmes/afternoons/audio/2018634246/arts-festival-review-with-mark-amery -](https://www.radionz.co.nz/national/programmes/afternoons/audio/2018634246/arts-festival-review-with-mark-amery)

The interview speaks specifically to *Rushes* from 7:50

STUFF, 26 FEB 2018

Composer Eden Mulholland puts a new take on performance in festival hit

Last updated 05:00, February 26 2018



SUPPLIED

Musician Eden Mulholland is the creator of *Rushes*, a performance featured in the New Zealand Festival.

Circa Theatre has been completely taken over this week by *Rushes*, a music and performance piece by composer Eden Mulholland.

Rushes, a multi-award-winning collaboration, is a live dance and theatre work laid out like a gallery, Mulholland said.

"We've taken over the entire Circa building complex which comprises Circa One, Circa Two and there's all the hallways, the access areas, behind the stage, the green room, upstairs, all the office upstairs.



OLIVER CRAWFORD

Visitors follow a weaving path through 20 rooms, light projections and different songs.

Read the full story here:

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/entertainment/arts/101647062/Composer-Eden-Mulholland-puts-a-new-take-on-performance-in-festival-hit>

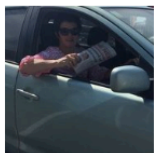
RADIO

RADIO NEW ZEALAND: NIGHTS WITH BARRY CRUMP:
Cultural Ambassador
25 JAN 2018: Malia Johnston with Chris Jannides

Nights for Thursday 25 January 2018

← Wednesday, 24 January 2018 | Friday, 26 January 2018 →

[Add all to playlist](#)



The Paper Run

7:12 PM The face of modern daily news journalism - Teresa Smith delivers the Westport News as well as writing for it. [Read more](#) (AUDIO)

[Listen](#) 12'44" | [Add to playlist](#) | [Download](#)

Cultural Ambassador

8:12 PM Chris Jannides is my cultural ambassador after eight - he has with him fellow choreographer - producing show of the most watched dance in new zealand - Maleeah Johnston. (AUDIO)

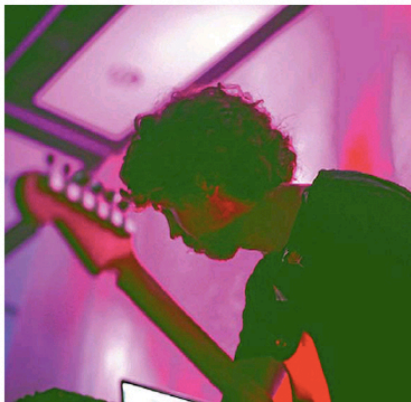
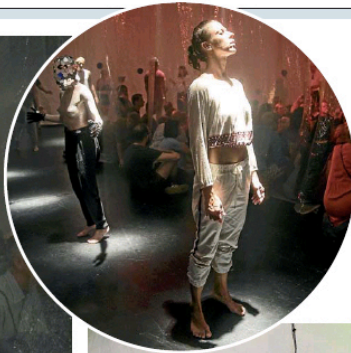
[Listen](#) 22'34" | [Add to playlist](#) | [Download](#)

Listen to the full interview here:

<https://tunein.com/radio/Nights-with-Bryan-Crump-p57706/?topicId=119659287>

The interview speaks specifically to *Rushes* from 16:28

New Zealand Festival 2018



Guaranteed rush

Visual journalist **Monique Ford** headed along to *Rushes* - a New Zealand Festival show that is said to defy categorisation. That is perhaps why it is described as art gallery meets theatre, dance, and film with 30 performers from around the country. It's also said to be a "choose your own adventure" or a "pick a pathway through a series of performance spaces that can be explored at will". Choreographer and director Malia Johnston explains: "With *Rushes*, you are inside the work. The visceral nature of live performance in this context is quite magical." *Rushes* runs until Monday at Circa.



Review

Kiwi composers reimagine Bach

A New Zealand Partita
Stephen De Pledge, St Mary of the Angels, Tuesday, February 27
Reviewed by John Button

This was the first concert in the New Zealand Festival's chamber music series that built on a fascinating premise - the response of seven New Zealand composers to the seven movements of Johann Sebastian Bach's Keyboard Partita No 3 in A minor, BWV 827.

Each of Bach's movements were followed by a Kiwi composer's response - commissioned especially for Stephen De Pledge - and there were two overall thoughts that came to mind at the concert's end.

Firstly, the Bach movements seemed somewhat obscured by the generous acoustic, yet each New Zealand composer's response sounded absolutely superb in the space. Strange, that.

The third partita was a very free work, starting with the wonderful *Fantasia*, each of the movements displayed both a freedom and legato mood that was not often there in Bach's keyboard works. That made each movement an ideal starting point for the New Zealand composers, and they each offered some superbly pianistic moments.

Leonie Holmes, Chris Gendall, Christopher Norton, Alex Taylor, Juliet Kiri Palmer, Celeste Oram and Helen Bowater were each inspired to give us some very arresting thoughts.

The relevant characteristics of each of Bach's movements elicited a response that was, while very free, was also musically convincing.

It helped that De Pledge's playing was stunningly virtuosic, and if his Bach was a little hazy in the church, it was probably equally convincing.



Stephen de Pledge's playing was stunningly virtuosic during A New Zealand Partita at St Mary of the Angels on Tuesday.

FestivalDay



with **Ruby Macandrew**

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Composer's new take on performance

AMBER-LEIGH WOOLF

Composer Edem Mulholland has been rushed off his feet transforming Wellington's Circa Theatre into the venue for his show *Rushes* – one of the New Zealand Festival's opening numbers.

The multi-award-winning collaboration is a live dance and theatre work laid out to resemble an art gallery, Mulholland says.

"We've taken over the entire Circa building complex, which comprises Circa One, Circa Two and there's all the hallways, the access areas, behind the stage, the green room, upstairs, all the office upstairs.

"All the spaces are little gallery rooms, where there's some sort of performance happening."

Having spent last week setting up his gallery, Mulholland says its walls will be covered in white paper, on which the work of visual artist Rowan Pierce will be projected. "You wander around with a beer with your friends and you discover little nooks and crannies with a performance happening," he explains.

"A lot of the performances are about the dancers exploring different states of movement."

Visitors will follow a weaving path through 20 rooms, each featuring light projections and different songs. *Rushes* ends in a room where the performance will "peak", he says.

The show's 30 performers can change rooms too, meaning every performance will be different each



At *Rushes*, spectators will follow a path as it weaves through 20 rooms, each featuring light projections and different songs.

PHOTO: OLIVER CRAWFORD

night. There will also be a new guest artist at each evening session.

Mulholland, who created *Rushes* with Malia Johnston and Rowan Pierce, says they first performed the show at last year's Fringe Festival in Auckland, where it was well-received.

"I haven't been to anything like

this before, a totally open gallery work with dance."

He describes *Rushes* as being "community-based" because all of the performers involved come from different walks of life.

"I really wanted this to be not fully-set because it's quite boring if you're playing the same thing over and over and over again."

Normally, dance pieces are set in a box but he calls his latest work upclose, "gritty" and down to earth.

"If you enjoy going to a gig and talking with your friends, taking photos of art, and being part of something, being swept away in something, this is for you."

The meaning is abstract and for

each viewer to decide, he adds.

Aside from his New Zealand Festival commitments, Mulholland has just completed a new performance and music video.

The release of *Forwarding Backwarding*, which features about 30 youth dancers, fits nicely with the staging of *Rushes*, he says.



Musician Edem Mulholland created *Rushes* with Malia Johnston and Rowan Pierce.

It took a year of work, including re-recording the track's vocals. "I wanted it to be right, because I am kind of proud of the song. I worked really hard on it and [while] I know it's not breaking any new ground with music, for me, I think it's kind of a good marriage of me as a pop writer and me as a composer for dance."

Mulholland is a songwriter, producer, composer, video director, graphic artist and contemporary dancer.

The details

Rushes

■ Circa Theatre, Taranaki St
■ February 27 till March 5 at 7:30pm; and March 4 at 4pm.
■ For more information and ticketing, see festival.co.nz

5 MINUTE QUIZ
Ready for round two?
Test your local knowledge
dompost.co.nz/capitalquiz



UNIVERSITY OF NEW ZEALAND

1. The United States television movie *The Day After* – watched by 100 million viewers in 1983 – involved what frightening scenario?
2. Does a vizsla have leaves, fins or paws?
3. What song did American entertainer Tony Bennett perform for the first time in San Francisco's Fairmont Hotel in 1961?
4. Is a horehound a dog, a plant or a poisonous toadstool?
5. The novels *My Brilliant Career*, *The Thorn Birds* and *On The Beach* were set in what country?
6. European Union president Jean-Claude Juncker comes from what country?
7. What first name was shared by an actress named Grable, a president's wife named Ford and a cartoon character named Rubble?
8. What does the letter C stand for in Unicef?
9. Complete the six states that make up New England: Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont and ----?

Eden Mulholland talks Rushes, Rooms and Writing

By Tim Gruar - February 15, 2018

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Eden Mulholland released a string of sweet indie pop albums a few years back and then disappeared. Now he's resurfaced with a newly composed soundtrack for the Opera *Peer Gynt*, written a score for a dance company and recorded a few songs, including his latest release *Forwarding Backwarding*. Tim Gruar had a chat to him on a balmy summer's day in one of the Capital's wonderful inner-city parks, talking about his new collaboration, the interactive dance production *Rushes*, for the upcoming **New Zealand Festival**.

Eden tells me he has been in Perth since the start of the year with his wife, **Erin** (formerly of Footnote Dance Company) who is working as Co3 dance company dance director. Eden also composes for Co3. They are a nomadic couple, working with various dance companies in Australia, occasionally teaming up with his brother Jol (Anika Moa, et al) who is working "as a producer at large." (Spoiler alert: Jol will be releasing an album later this year, though Eden's lips are sealed on what that might look like). Eden is also still making pop music – in between festival gigs – having just released a new single called *Forwarding, Backwarding*, which will be performed in this show as well. The long-term plan is to release an album soon. His dance card also features trips to China and Fiji for writing excursions.



Eden Mulholland at 13thFloor (2015)



Rushes, Eden's latest project, and the reason we are chatting, first featured at the Auckland Fringe Festival last year to great critical acclaim. Presented by the dance company Movement of the Human, the show is currently moving in to city's harbour front Circa Theatre, creating a veritable rabbit warren of unique performance spaces made of contemporary temporary materials. The

Read the full story here:

<https://www.13thfloor.co.nz/eden-mulholland-talks-to-the-13th-floor-about-rushes/>