

Yael Flexer
Nic Sandiland
Dance & Digital Works



Management: Joe Bates & Claire Morton
Morton Bates Art Services
Phone: +44 (0)20 7724 1616
info@mortonbates.com

www.yaelflexer.com / www.nicsandiland.com



Yael Flexer, Nic Sandiland Dance & Digital Works

Yael Flexer & Nic Sandiland, Dance & Digital Works

Formerly known as Bedlam Dance Company led by Jerwood Award winner and artistic director Yael Flexer, the company has joined forces with key collaborator, digital artist, Nic Sandiland. The new company, established in 2010, reflects the growing body of digital dance works created in recent years, complimenting its long standing touring programmes.

Yael and Nic's work centres on the generation of a sense of intimacy in live performance and digital installation in a way which acknowledges the physicality and presence of the viewer. The works bring to the fore a fluid definition of audience as viewer, witness, participant or user and aim to both reaffirm and critically examine notions of corporeality and performativity. Although some commissions involve projection in performance, the company favors creating distinct live and digital works. This approach allows for contemplation and resonance in the encounter of live bodies in performance. In terms of the digital work It considers both the movements contained within the work and the movements of the viewer as inter-related as part of the choreographic whole.

The company offers: **four distinct areas of work:**

1. **Live performances** in a range of theatre, studio & non-theatrical spaces
2. **Digital installations** for foyers, galleries, shopping centres and empty shops
3. **A programme of professional training** for dance and interdisciplinary artists
4. **A range of participatory activities** (for groups ages 12+) including technique, choreography or repertory workshops, dance and film projects, film/editing and new technology workshops.

As well as these options being available as individual activities the company also offers a **unique multi-modal Event approach**, which combines all or some of the above elements to create a tailored package of dance and digital works.

The company works with an **international team of performers** Including:

Lyndsey McConville (UK)

Aya Kobayashi (Japan)

Aneta Szydlak (Germany/Poland)

Luke Birch (UK)

Hanna Martin (UK)

and a **multi-disciplinary team of collaborators:**

Composers: Nye Parry, Kami Postel, and Dougie Evans

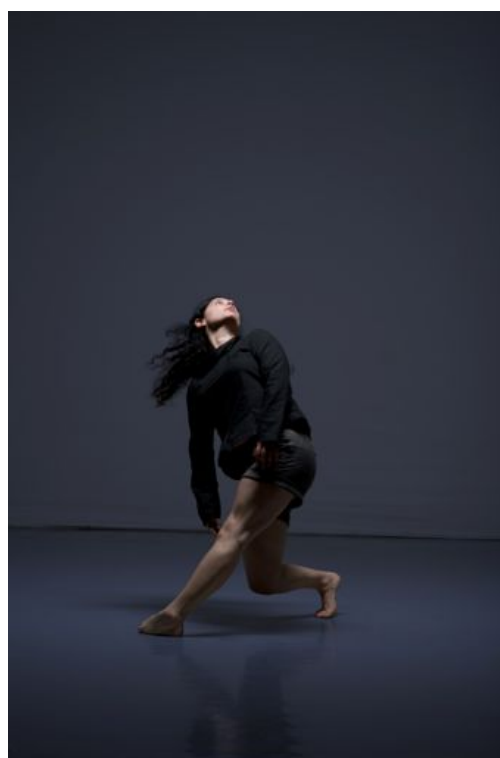
Lighting designer: Michael Mannion

Dramaturg: Gary Stevens

Artistic advisor: Mark Whitlaw.

Resident at Chichester University and Associate Artists of Woking Dance Festival,

the company creates and presents work both nationally and internationally.



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What is the work like?

Live work: Work is made for theatres and studio spaces. Yael's live work has a distinctive performance 'stamp' of informal and witty delivery interwoven with dance that is intricate, fast paced, and emotionally driven. The work is technically sophisticated but retains a human quality generating an intimacy between performers and audience members. Work is made through a collaborative process with performers and involves commissions of music & design.

Digital work: An investigation into movement and choreography beyond the stage, ranging from small-scale sculptures to large-scale immersive installations. In contrast to live performance, these pieces engage with the public in small numbers or one-to-one encounters over a much longer period of time giving people space to dwell, interact and contemplate the work. Many recent works have taken the form of interactive video installations often integrating the movement of the public through the application of new technologies. Works are best suited for spaces such as galleries, studios or areas of public through flow (including outdoor spaces) where they can be sited for greater durations than performances.

Professional Training: Projects range from choreographic labs to specialist workshops for arts practitioners in new digital technologies including interactivity and video. The company also offers the option of creating work with professional dancers that is interwoven into the live work.

Participation: Youth and community tailor-made projects, involve workshops with a dance or dance and technology focus. Workshops can be geared towards creating curtain raisers and dance films.

What The Press say?

a gently deviant sense of humor **The Guardian**

dance that is unforced, unaffected, charming and smart **Time out**

a subtle, quick-witted essay on the fluctuation of human interaction...an arresting piece that left you, in a desirable sense, wanting more
The Times

Sophisticated dance and infectious humour. **Birmingham Metro, Simon Webb**

Flexer's gratifyingly idiosyncratic choreographic voice is marked by an engaging offbeat humour and a recurring use of stop-start rhythms. In the process, her dances serve up a delightfully fresh, often funny look at identity and relationships.

Time Out, Donald Hutera

The rise and rise of the Israeli born Yael Flexer to front the rank of contemporary choreographers has hit the home stretch

Metro London, Keith Watson

The work is a string of disrupted gestures, in which we glimpse Flexer in various moments of assertiveness, discomfort, repose and also calculation as she checks out her effect on the audience. This witty, modest flick through the layers of Flexer's personality shows both private woman and public performer, but never loses sight of the slippage in between

The Guardian, Judith Mackrell

Bedlam came to the Place on Tuesday night -a dance company going by that name at least, though what it had to offer was some of the sprightliest, funniest modern dance to emerge in a long time...This Bedlam is a madness that should be given every encouragement.

The Independent on Sunday, Jenny Gilbert

This Israeli-born, London-based choreographer makes work that is unpretentious, warm and often humorous, yet without giving short-shrift to the complexities and ambiguities of being alive.

Dance Umbrella News/Critical dance.com, Donald Hutera

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Current works available for touring and exhibition

Live work:

The Living Room (65 minutes)

Woking International Dance Festival Commission 2010

The Living Room is an intimate dance set in what appears to be the bare bones of a living or rehearsal room. Inhabiting an imagined domestic space, the work cuts fast-paced movement with informal banter and wry humour. Yael Flexer's distinctive choreography effortlessly intertwines witty delivery with dance that is intricate and emotionally driven.

Choreographed by Yael Flexer, ***The Living Room*** involves an exceptional team of performers and collaborators: including: Lighting Designer Michael Mannion; Composers Karni Postel, Nye Parry, and Dougie Evans; Costume Designer Holly Murray; and Dramaturg Gary Stevens.



The international company of performers includes: Luke Birch (EDge), Lyndsey McConville (Bedlam, Sue Davies Bank Project, k/n/d/c), Aneta Szydlak (X Factor, Dance Theatre of Ireland), Aya Kobayashi (Bedlam, mapdance) & introduces apprentice dancer Hannah Martin.

Yael will also be joining her company on stage, alongside some very special guest performers that she has invited into her *Living Room* as it tours around the UK and beyond.



The *Living Room* also includes the option of special appearances by guest artists:

Option 1: New group work made with local artists preceding the company performance

Option 2: Solos and duets made with 2 local artists

Option 3: Live cellist Karni Postel from Israel

The Living Room has been commissioned by Woking Dance Festival, University of Chichester and supported by Arts Council England through Grants for the Arts with additional funding through Bi-Arts, an initiative of the British Council and the Government of Israeli's Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Culture and Sport.

Digital works:

Orbital



Orbital is an interactive installation in which a glowing sphere in the centre of the room depicts the image of a solo dancer. As the viewer moves around the sphere the dancer responds, tracing her own path through a complex system of rotating and twisting spaces.

Orbital requires a blacked out space at least 3m x 3m and 3m high to rig the projector. The fitting for the projector should be a scaffold lighting rig at near-ceiling height. Failing this the venue and company should negotiate how to suspend the cradle. A standard 13 amp power outlet is also required. The company will provide all other technical equipment. The venue will need to have adequate security and invigilation whilst the installation is running.

Gravity Shift

Gravity Shift is a series of life-size video projections depicting a number of solo dances adapted from the live work. Each projection presents a situation where the direction of gravity has been altered; some changes are subtle, others more extreme. Subsequently the nature of the dancers' movements and dynamics are shifted in strange and unexpected ways through the re-configuration of gravity.

Conventionally a dancer moves on top of a fixed horizontal dance floor. *Gravity Shift* challenges this relationship by utilizing the technology usually associated with *flight* simulators to create a moving, tilting dance floor.



Gravity Shift has been commissioned by the Middlesex, University and supported by Arts Council England through Grants for the Arts.

Shop Installations

Everything Looks Beautiful in Slow Motion

Everything Looks Beautiful in Slow Motion (*ELBiSM*) is a window-based interactive installation set in the context of a shopping centre or high street shopping area. The installation takes a short 10-second video of pedestrians as they pass by the front of the window and subsequently replays the video in slow motion and black and white with an accompanying ambient soundtrack. Slow-motion and black and white are standard techniques often employed by the mainstream film industry to emphasise key moments of a narrative in cinema.



ELBiSM utilises these tools to highlight the everyday actions of pedestrians as they pass through a shopping centre. It aims to elevate the validity of these mundane and often overlooked actions and question the presumed hierarchy of one type of movement over another.

ELBiSM is a back-projected video filling an entire shop front window, visible to pedestrians from the outside. A small concealed camera in an opposite building/shop transmits a video signal to a computer connected to the video projector in the shop.

The projection is not visible during day-time when the sun is out, thus winter afternoon/evenings are best times to exhibit. The shop should also be unlit and away from direct lighting. The work is simple to turn on and off each day and does not need a technical expert to do so. Instruction and support will be provided by the artist. The artist will supply all equipment apart from a video projector which should be 4000 lumens+ and will need to be hired by the promoter.

Bypasser

Bypasser is a window-based interactive installation set in the context of a shopping centre or high street shopping area. The installation links the movement of passers by to the motion of a *moving panorama* back-projected onto a shop window.

Normally when one travels, it is the traveller who moves whilst the background remains static. **Bypasser** inverts this relationship in an ironic manner by creating a situation where the background moves in synchronisation with the speed and direction of the walker.

Bypasser is a back-projected video filling an entire shop front window, visible to pedestrians from the outside. The projection depicts a series of shop-fronts from the surrounding area that have been filmed as a *tracking shot*, i.e. a view of the shops whilst moving along a pavement/concourse, as a pedestrian might see when walking through. Concealed sensors on the outside of the shop detect the speed and direction of passers-by. Information about this movement is directly linked to the playback of the video in such a way that if a pedestrian stands in front of the window they see a static image of a shop front, i.e. video playback is stationary. If a pedestrian walks past the window the background shops *move with them*, following their speed and direction.



Yael Flexer, Nic Sandiland Dance & Digital Works: An Overview

Over the past 5 years Bedlam has gradually moved towards an event module of presentation encompassing, (as a full package or as separate elements) live work, interactive and video installations as well as tailor-made participatory activity. *Yael Flexer, Nic Sandiland Dance & Digital Works* highlights their work as established independent artists and presents their unique approach to dance collaboration, presentation and participation.

The company works with a wide range of partners including dance, visual arts, new media, educational and non-arts based organisations as well as other artists. Events are curated with partners in a way that responds to local needs and aspirations creating a context for the presentation of the work. Organisations can choose to present existing works or commission new works. Live work can be adapted for unusual spaces or made site-specifically. Installations are made especially for galleries or areas of public through flow (both indoor and outdoor). Company members create curtain raisers with youth and community participants that are presented alongside the company's live work. The new *Living Room* event planned for 2010 also includes the option of creating a new work with local and regional dance artists that is interwoven into the company's performance. This is particularly relevant for promoters who wish to engage with their dance community developing audiences in this unique way.

Bedlam has been regularly funded by The Arts Council through Grants for the Arts and works in partnership with key dance organisations including: Woking Dance Festival, Chichester University, Swindon Dance National Dance Agency, Dance South West National Dance Agency, South East Dance, National Dance Agency, Take Art!, Bath Spa University, Bath ICIA, Bewegungs Art, Freiburg, Germany, West Sussex County Council, Dance Umbrella, Sadler's Wells, Greenwich Dance Agency & The Place.

Biographies

Yael Flexer

Under the direction of Yael Flexer, Bedlam Dance Company has been creating contemporary dance for the past 15 years. Originally formed by Yael as Choreographer in Residence at The Place Theatre, London, the company has toured small to middle scale live works throughout the UK and internationally. Bedlam has been commissioned to create live and/or interactive works for among others: Sadler's Wells, Woking Dance Festival, The South Bank Centre, The Arts Depot, London, The Engine Room, Somerset and, Dies de Dansa, (Barcelona, Spain). Commissions as an independent artist include: E-Werk Tanz Festival (Freiburg, Germany), Edge, London Contemporary Dance School, Gravity & Levity, Scottish Dance Theatre, Laban Centre, Ludus Dance Company, Influx & Loop Dance Companies. Yael regularly leads choreographic Labs, workshops and professional training in the UK and internationally including: Movement 12, Brighton, Independent Dance & Greenwich Dance Agency, London, Swindon Dance, Attakalari Centre/Facets, India, Dansens Hus, Denmark, Bewegungs Arts and Potsdam Fabrik, Germany, Suzanne Dellal and The Tel-Aviv Dance Centre, Israel. Yael has been recently awarded a bursary from The University of Chichester towards an MPhil/PhD practice-based research and also directs mapdance, the University's postgraduate touring company.

Nic Sandiland

Nic Sandiland has made work in London, Europe and South Asia and has presented at theatres, art galleries, and unusual venues. Much of his work has been site specific. His film work has been shown worldwide and has been regularly broadcast on UK TV (Channel 4). Nic has collaborated with Rosemary Lee on projects *Remote Dancing* (2004-07), *Apart From the Road* (2002-4) and is currently developing a site-specific project, *Weather Dances* for landmark buildings around the UK. Other recent collaborations include work with Gary Stevens on *Wake Up and Hide* presented at Mats Gallery, East London; *16 Frames* with Candoco Dance Company commissioned by The South Bank Centre; and *One Blood*, a cross arts-science education project with Union Dance and Bow Arts Trust. Nic has taught workshops on new media in dance around the World including: Bangalore, India and Seoul, South Korea. He currently teaches video production on the MA dance programme at London Contemporary Dance School and is programme leader for BA Sonic Arts at the Lansdown Centre for Electronic Arts at Middlesex University.

Participatory youth and community education work

The company's team of highly skilled professional dance artists lead a diverse education programme that encompasses youth work, GCSE, and A/AS level study residencies. These programmes are suitable for participants age 12+. Over the years, Yael has earned considerable recognition for her thoughtful and inspiring education and outreach activity. The company's education work is driven by the desire to open contemporary dance and dance and new technology to a wide public through participation and performance.

The company aims to establish a personal connection between company members and groups by enabling individuals to experience dance first hand and can help create a true context for presenting the company's work. Education work ranges from one-off workshops to long-term tailor-made residencies. Residencies can focus on developing dance skills or on dance and new technology.

- **Dance specific one-day workshops and residencies** include technique, repertoire and creative work and often lead towards the creation of curtain raisers (short works presented alongside the company performance and/or independently).
- **Dance and new technology** residencies can involve short courses focusing on dance for the camera, projection in performance or interactive work and can lead toward participants or the artistic team creating short films, installations or live work using new technology.

What do people say about our participatory work?

Yael has a natural and immediate ability to communicate on a very human level as well as demonstrating a fundamentally complex and sensitive approach to her work.

Sue Akroyd, Foundation for Community Dance

This workshop was amazing and the leaders were fantastic. I really enjoyed being in the choreographic process.

Participant, West Sussex County Youth Dance Company

I really liked the combination of dance and film, making duets outside and for the camera

Participant, Hastings & St. Leonard's Excellence Cluster, Doing: dance film residency

I really enjoyed improvising, as I haven't really done that before, it really helped me develop my dance skills and my choreography for the GCSE exams

Participant, Hastings & St. Leonard's Excellence Cluster, Doing: dance film residency

This was such an amazing week, really challenging, really inspiring

Participant, Swindon Youth Dance Company commission, Push

I thought that I would feel very self conscious...but the teachers had a way of making you relax and encouraging you to just try out different ideas

Participant, Carlsdon College

Professional training

The company is committed to involving other artists in its creative process and performance as well as supporting artists to create their own work. The company regularly runs courses for professional artists with a dance or dance and new technology focus and supports artists by offering performance opportunities and mentoring.

Dance specific courses- One day workshops include technique, repertoire and improvisation leading to choreographic tasks and discussion. Longer residencies operate in three main forms:

- Courses focusing on process and methodology based on the company's productions. These normally begin with bodywork and a technique class with afternoons focusing on improvisation, contact work, choreographic tasks and discussion.
- Creation of new work with a group of local artists that is performed alongside the company's live work. Courses involve daily technique class with afternoons focusing on improvisation, set material and choreographic tasks leading towards the creation of the new work.
- Creation of new work with two local artists that is integrated into company performances. Created as a commission this work involves an intensive making period with Yael and company members. Following the performances with the company artists are free to develop and perform the work independently for a period of up to 2 years.

Dance and new technology courses are tailor made for artists from a variety of disciplines and/or specifically for dance artists. Courses focus on either dance for the camera, projection in performance or interactive work. Courses operate as choreographic labs, teaching relevant skills and supporting artists in enhancing their research, knowledge and expertise.

Lecture Demonstrations and academic presentations. Yael and Nic together and individually offer lecture demonstrations, gallery talks, pre and post show talks and academic presentations.

Thank you. Brilliant teaching, really clear and challenging material

Participant, Chichester Professional Development Day

The weekend has inspired me to find my creative thread again. It's been a long time since I have improvised with people so I am going to find more opportunities to explore. I will create a new piece with freshness and different motivation to initiate new material.

Participant, Recess Swindon Dance

I just wanted to say a Big thank you, for a fun-tastic, fulfilling and inspiring couple of weekends! It's been so nice to dance and make and meet such lovely dancers in the region. And of course to work and dance with you so intimately. I very much enjoy observing the way you approach choreography and shape your work, I feel it resonates with the way I approach the craft...Its quite rare these days and in this neck of the woods to get such a Fab opportunity, I hope this project will inspire more to come.

Participant, South West artists, Doing project

Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to work with you, I thoroughly enjoyed every minute of it right from the start to all the performances. It was definitely a challenging project for me... I have learnt so much from it, which I can now take away and deliver in other areas of my work

Participant, South West artists, Doing project

This was a really valuable experience for me and woke me up to the possibility of developing my own performance skills

Participant, South West artists, Doing project

Outline technical requirements and costs

Performance: 8m x 8m performance space (theatre or studio) with sprung floor
Minimum 1 (preferably 2 technicians) to assist with pre-rig, get in, performance & get-out

Digital work: Though we do not require high level technical support, most of the works do require the provision by the venue of an invigilator responsible for simple daily tasks (turning off/on of exhibit), equipment security, and a public interface. Requirements vary depending on the size and nature of the work; however most video pieces require a dark or blacked out space and interactive work requires a space minimum height 3m, depth 3m and width 3m, Large-scale work also requires provision of projection cradles with rigging points (or shelving). It is strongly advised that the technical manager of the venue be present during and prior to get-in. **Please contact the company for full technical specifications** and to discuss your specific needs.

Get in: Performance - on the day as long as the venue has done a pre-rig
Digital work – on the day, minimum of 6 hours
Shop Front Installations – one day get in prior to opening

On the road: Performance only: 7 - 8
Installation: 8 - 10