

## The Boom Project Rosalind Crisp / Omeo Dance

*"The Boom Project is devastating". Sydney Morning Herald, March 16, 2015*



Dance has exhausted herself. Form is collapsing. Nature is rapidly being extinguished.

Our house is burning, hors control.

In the wake of this collapse, the infinite potential of human attention is exposed.

No longer the centre of a domesticated world, Dance has gone wild, unfastened herself - each moment a tear in time.

Touring team

Dancer / choreographer - Rosalind Crisp

Companion / provocateur - Helen Herbertson

Designer / technical - Ben Cobham

Duration - 40 minutes

Video clip - <https://vimeo.com/125373910>

Images - Heidrun Löhr

*"A large warehouse magically transformed by Bluebottle. Crisp moves through it like a globe of physical force, leaving behind a palpable trail of energy. By the end of 45 minutes, the entire enormous space is pulsating, and so are we". The Guardian March 23, 2015*

Artistic note - Rosalind Crisp

Helen's gaze thickens my awareness of feelings and fictions in my body. My years of deconstructing movement are underneath, enabling a complexity of compositional choices, but what is tearing at my attention now is more loaded than a simple direction of a bone in space or a separating of two surfaces. This shift in my ongoing research practice has been further inflamed by the shock of returning to Australia. The countryside I grew up in has been devastated: the forests I roamed stripped by clear felling, the river I swam in poisoned by a copper mine, feral deer wreck my family's conservation covenant, suburbia spreads like a cancer, summer tourists claim the beaches oblivious to rare nesting birds, government 'fuel reduction' incinerates thousands of hectares every year, half of all digging mammal species are extinct. Australia's biodiversity is collapsing. This saddens me deeply. It is a force I feel when I'm dancing the complex and subtle cognitive processes inside the body.

The Boom Project has grown out of my exchanges with Helen Herbertson between 2010 and 2015 in Paris, Melbourne and far eastern Victoria. She begins by observing my dancing, at times circling slowly to realign the angle between us. She shifts to one side of me... asks 'what is she doing now?' Sometimes I respond, in French or English. We murmur to each other. Language is intermittent, fragments of commentary of the lived experience, sometimes solid sentences and direct exchange. One of us might move off to a far edge of the space, stretching yet never losing the connection, occasionally shouting back from the distance.

Reflections - Helen Herbertson

We came to this work sharing practice with long stretches of time in between. Watching, waiting, asking questions of 'her', giving space to be together as the territory unfolded. My 'place' with the work opened and closed, rose and fell, expanded, deepened, at once mysterious, crystalline, empty, full. For a long time I resisted moving to watch Ros's extraordinary facility with improvised physicality inside this new terrain of image, place, sensation. The vastness of the planet colliding with the fullness of 'being', inside and out was a constant joy and surprise. As we circled around the 'something' of the work, I asked myself what to do, where to be, who to be, how to be. My interrelationship with Ros, my collaborative history with Ben, connection to my own work, my dancing and performing nestled into the terrain. The imprint of a first presentation space joined playful interactions with Ben's curiosity and questions. The entrance of others to watch drew a line in the sand, 'lightly now' and a substance of sorts. That we could share the first outing all together, everything resting lightly upon everything else was very satisfying. The Boom Project was so much more than the sum of the parts. Still, I don't look too hard at what it was/is. I know there is more to find as we go again and again, as Ros ingests what unfolded and goes on with the multiple reverberations. The passionate questing continues...

Credits- The Boom Project produced & presented by Arts House and Rosalind Crisp / Omeo Dance in Dance Massive festival, Melbourne, March 2015. Developed with support from the City of Melbourne through Arts House and the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria. Initial research supported by an Arts House CultureLab residency at Meat Market; the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body; East Gippsland Shire Council; and the Notafe Festival, Estonia. Touring as part of Platform East: a project of Omeo Dance assisted by the Australian government through the Ministry for the Arts' Catalyst—*Australian Arts and Culture Fund*.



## The Boom Project review – Rosalind Crisp leaves palpable trail of energy

[www.theguardian.com/stage/2015/mar/23/the-boom-project-review-dance-massive](http://www.theguardian.com/stage/2015/mar/23/the-boom-project-review-dance-massive)

5/5 stars

### Blueprint Showroom, Melbourne

The Australian dancer and choreographer's new work comes from a place of deep inner focus, providing an exhilarating tonic for mind and body

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Jana Perkovic Monday 23 March 2015

I am not sure which astounds me more: Rosalind Crisp's new work for Dance Massive festival, [The Boom Project](#), or the fact that I am able to describe it at all. Dance pieces of this kind – pure dances without a narrative, based entirely in movement – are usually extremely difficult to explain in words. You resort to metaphors of cooking or cuddling, or philosophy.

But The Boom Project is so exhilaratingly earthy and present that it seems to ground us instead of confusing us. I entered the space exhausted and hungry; I exited elated, blabbing. It is a dance piece that restores clarity of mind and energises the body.

A few words on Crisp: with her company Omeo Dance, Crisp had a highly respected studio practice in Sydney from 1996 until she was poached by [Atelier de Paris–Carolyn Carlson](#), where she remained associate artist until the end of 2012. She currently divides her time between Australia and Europe, touring, curating, and developing an influential teaching practice. If there was ever a good candidate for a damehood, Crisp would be it.

Her practice is based on sourcing movement from any part of the body but eliminating habitual gestures. There is no set choreography. In The Boom Project, Crisp responds to the space, the audience, and quiet verbal and physical cues by Helen Herbertson, creating on-the-spot sequences of highly conscious movement unanchored in any recognisable dance poses.

Deborah Jowitt writes about dance that is all shape-making and dancers who forget to think about how it gets done. While so much contemporary dance stays on the surface of the body, Crisp sources hers from deep inside, achieving a powerful physical presence. Her movement comes from a place of inner focus and remains energised even when slow or still, never faltering. Almost clown-like movements morph from one difficult gesture to another without ever settling into a moment of pause, a comma. Blueprint Showroom is a new space for Arts House, a large warehouse magically transformed by Bluebottle for this piece into an ethereal white space that seems to recede into infinity. Crisp moves through it like a globe of physical force, leaving behind a palpable trail of energy. By the end of 45 minutes, the entire enormous space is pulsating, and so are we.

## Rosalind Crisp's Boom Project dances to the end of hope

Chloe Smethurst

Published: March 16, 2015 - 2:10PM

### DANCE

#### THE BOOM PROJECT ★★★★★

**Rosalind Crisp/Omeo Dance**

**Blueprint Showroom, North Melbourne**

**Until March 21**

A haunting conversation between old friends, *The Boom Project* is devastating.

The piece is performed by Rosalind Crisp, with design by Ben Cobham and Helen Herbertson as provocateur. A creative team with such a wealth of experience as this is rare. What they create here is a kind of anti-dance, set in a hazy no man's land.

The two women are sitting on the floor. Herbertson is still, watching intently as Crisp traces the length of her own thigh and sends her fingers creeping into her belly.

As she stands, in a panel of light made almost solid by fog, Crisp accepts each impulse that arises. Her almost awkward capers and groans cause Herbertson to smile. When Crisp eventually leaves, her companion tenderly touches the floor, as though trying to retain the memory of footprints.

What at first seems like an inconsequential disconnectedness between movements becomes a tragedy of deconstruction. In this space, cohesive dance no longer exists, only fragments of unpredictable, bewildering action remain. Herbertson quietly calls, "Where is she?" Crisp mumbles, switching between English and French.

Cobham's huge, drum-barrelled light floods through the window panes which divide the performance space from the rest of the old industrial building. The light gradually swivels, moving away from the audience. Another loss.

In the program, Crisp notes her sadness at Australia's ongoing environmental degradation, the extinction of native species and the explosion of suburban housing, but *The Boom Project* could just as easily be a meditation on dementia, or any demise.

*This story was found at: <http://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/dance/rosalind-crisps-boom-project-dances-to-the-end-of-hope-20150316-1m0258.html>*

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### Biographies

#### **Rosalind Crisp** dancer/choreographer

**Rosalind Crisp** trained at the Victorian Ballet School, Melbourne and the European Dance Development Centre in The Netherlands. In 1995 she created her first major solo work, *The Cutting Room*, with director Nigel Jamieson at Performance Space, Sydney. In 1996 she established the Omeo Dance studio in the Newtown flour mill - the site of her choreographic research for over ten years and home for a community of dance artists in Sydney. She developed local and international exchanges there, often in partnership with Performance Space, receiving a NSW Women & Arts Fellowship (1996), a MO Award for best Australian female dancer of the year (1997), a Masters by research from the University of Western Sydney (1998), and a choreographic fellowship from the Australia Council (2000-2001).

First invited to France in 2001 by Michel Caserta, director of the Biennale du Val-de-Marne, Rosalind settled in Paris in 2004, based at the Atelier de Paris - Carolyn Carlson where she was their associate artist until the end of 2012 and an artist in residence at la Norville (Bretigny sur Orge). The Atelier managed her company of French dancers, her productions and tours, facilitated her exchanges with other Australian and European artists and invited her to curate an Australian focus for their June Events festival (2012).

Rosalind Crisp/Omeo Dance have created 15 large scale works and many smaller pieces, toured to numerous festivals in countries including UK, Switzerland, France, Germany, Poland, Norway, Finland, Sweden, Croatia, Estonia, Luxembourg, Taiwan, USA & Australia, with support from the Australia Council, Arts NSW, Arts Victoria, DRAC Ile de France, the Choreographic Centres of Grenoble, Belfort and Roubaix, Tanzfabrik Berlin and venues and festivals throughout Europe and Australia. Rosalind has been commissioned to make pieces for Carnivale festival Sydney, La Biennale du Val-de-Marne Paris, Park Chamarande Paris, Laban Centre London, HZT Inter-University of the Arts Berlin, Two Fish Berlin, Theatre Vorpommern Germany, Art Stations Foundation Poland, DOCH Stockholm, and VCA - University of Melbourne. Rosalind is sought after as a teacher and mentor. In 2014 she was made an honorary fellow of the VCA - University of Melbourne. In 2016 she was made a Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et Lettres (Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters) by the French government.

The foundation of her work is her consistent solo studio practice and her long-term collaborations, in particular with French dancers Céline Debyser and Max Fossati, Australian dancer Lizzie Thomson, performer Andrew Morrish, Swiss musicians Hansueli Tischhauser and Bo Wiget, German lighting designer Marco Wehrspann, French writer Isabelle Ginot and Australian choreographer Helen Herbertson. [www.omeodance.com](http://www.omeodance.com)

#### **Helen Herbertson** live provocateur

Across an extensive career **Helen Herbertson** has worked in many facets of the arts profession including significant periods as choreographer, artistic director, independent producer, project manager, teacher, mentor, board member and artistic advisor. In 2007 Helen was honoured with the Kenneth Myer Medallion for Distinguished Contribution to the Performing Arts. As a performer, choreographer and creative collaborator, Helen has been crafting performance for more than three decades, regularly presenting in Australian and international festivals. (Adelaide, Melbourne, Glasgow, Dublin, Paris, Singapore, Portland, Tokyo, New York, Zurich). Her work has been supported with grants from Australia Council, Arts Victoria and the South Australian Department for the Arts and has received numerous Green Room Nominations, with Awards for Best Production, Original Choreography, Direction, Outstanding Creative Collaboration and the inaugural 2003 Australian Dance Award for Independent dance (with Ben Cobham). Helen has been active in the development of Australian dance, dancers and choreographers through a variety of leadership and advisory roles: - Artistic Director – Danceworks (89-97), Artistic Director – Dancehouse (01-03), Member of the Board - Green Mill Dance Project, Foundation member of Committee of Management - Moriarty's Project (2003-), Member (1997) and Deputy Chair (1998) of the Dance Fund, Australia Council, Member of course advisory groups, assessment panels, examiner of Bachelor, Masters and PhD (Dance) and currently Senior Lecturer, Graduate/Hons Coordinator VCA Dance, University of Melbourne. [realtimearts.net/realtimedance/12\\_choreographers/helen\\_herbertson](http://realtimearts.net/realtimedance/12_choreographers/helen_herbertson)

#### **Ben Cobham** designer/lighting

In 1996 **Ben Cobham's** interests, specifically the integration of light and form, and the collaborative projects that he became immersed in at this time were crucial in streamlining his focus and defining his work. The years that followed mark the beginning of Ben defining his work as an artist. During this period Bluebottle grew in tandem with the outreaching talents of Ben and his business partner Andrew Livingston. Bluebottle has recently reshaped its entire structure and currently operates with a permanent multi-disciplinary staff of sixteen. Ben's work can be seen in theatres, galleries, museums, found architectural spaces and architecture through disciplines such as music, dance and visual art. Ben has a strong interest in working honestly and with simplicity to create exciting outcomes that both challenge and excite him and the viewer. Ben looks forward to the unknown and is at his best when challenged. The outstanding work of Bluebottle was honoured with the 2007 Green Room John Truscott Award for Excellence in Design. In 2016 Ben won the green room award for design (dance) for The Boom Project.