

Between Tiny Cities រាងទីក្រុងតុច

By Nick Power

EDUCATION RESOURCE

Resource developed by Deanne Bullen 2020.

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Between Tiny Cities រវាងទីក្រុងតូច education resource

CONTENTS

OVERVIEW & WARNINGS

THEMES, PRODUCTION & CURRICULUM

BEFORE THE SHOW

AFTER THE SHOW

ABOUT THE COMPANY

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Contents

Show rundown		 1
Warnings		 1
Themes		 2
Production		 2
Curriculum links &	& activities	 3
Before the show		 4-8
After the show		 9
Analyse/apply		 9
Meet the compar	ny	 10-1
Additional resour	ces	 1









CONTENTS

OVERVIEW & WARNINGS

THEMES, PRODUCTION & CURRICULUM

BEFORE THE SHOW

AFTER THE SHOW

ABOUT THE COMPANY

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Show rundown

In Between Tiny Cities Int Spinto, dancers Erak Mith (from Phnom Penh) and Aaron Lim (from Darwin) use the rituals, movement styles and language of their shared hip-hop culture to reveal the dramatically different worlds that surround them and uncover the choreographic links that unite them. Choreographed by internationally-renowned Sydney hip-hop dance artist Nick Power and accompanied by the beats and sound design of Jack Prest, the work blends the raw, wild energy of b-boy battles with skilful improvisation and choreography, offering a cross-cultural perspective on style, culture and locality. The project is the culmination of a four-year dance exchange between Darwin's D*City Rockers and Cambodia's Tiny Toones youth program during which time the two crews have travelled, trained, battled and performed together.



B-Boy (Break Boy) and B-Girl (Break Girl) originated from the Bronx of New York in the early 70s. The DJ would play the 'breaks' of songs, i.e. the part of the song where it was beat only, no lyrics. Those who danced to these 'breaks' were called 'Break Boy and Break Girl' or 'B-Boy; B-Girl'.

WARNINGS

The audience is required to stand for the entire duration of the performance. Wheelchair users can be accommodated.

SUPPORTED BY

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CONTENTS

OVERVIEW & WARNINGS

THEMES, PRODUCTION & CURRICULUM

BEFORE THE SHOW

AFTER THE SHOW

ABOUT THE COMPANY

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Themes

It is all about b-boys – b-boy battles that works with a cross cultural perspective on style and culture.

Production

Style and Conventions

This project is the result of a four-year dance exchange between Darwin's D*City Rockers and Cambodia's Tiny Toones youth program. The two crews have travelled, trained, battled and performed together, and *Between Tiny Cities*, is the culmination of that exchange.

Since premiering at Arts House in Dance Massive 2017, the show has toured to 20 destinations, from major Australian performing arts centres to remote NT communities, from a skate centre in Phnom Penh to some of Europe's most prestigious dance festivals.

The two b*boys who perform this piece are Erak Mith, from Phnom Penh, and Aaron Lim, originally from Darwin. Using the rituals, movement styles and language of their shared hip-hop culture they reveal the dramatically different worlds that surround them and uncover the choreographic links that unite them.

In an interview with Nick Power, the choreographer of *Between Tiny Cities*, he explains why the performance is staged with the dancers in the middle and the audience standing around the edge of the circular

dance floor rather than on a raised stage with the audience sitting.

"I think that both can work for me. The first two works I've done as an independent have definitely been in a circle with people actively participating — a standing audience with members inside. We open the circle up right at the end. And yeah, that participatory structure feels like home to me. And so that's why I use it. Also, it puts it in a really specific context of hip hop. I just feel like it wouldn't have worked if it was transposed onto a square stage with a seated audience."

Interview with Nick Power

Music and sound

Jack Prest's sound design, with its down beat grooves, creates a chilled urban sound scape, supporting the idea that although the dancers spend most of their time diametrically facing each other, they are not opposed to, or in conflict with, each other. Much of this work is a meditation on how breakdancing (or any dancing) can move beyond its roots of competition and opposition toward engagement, cooperation and understanding.

Review - Dance Magazine - July 2019

Lighting

At times lighting designer Bosco Shaw plays with the circle – bisecting it with a thick rectangular light, and then pulling up the light so high that the audience becomes oblivious to the circle and sees only lots of people in the space. Another time the light accentuates a conversation of forearms and fingers, which zooms focus to a small circle of activity. Like the choreography the lighting is an important part of the narrative as it plays around and picks up on various physical states.

Review online at Dance Massive – March 2017

Set/stage

The audience stands around the edge of a taped white circle. The standing recreates the social and competition circle of the street dance battles. The audience cannot escape seeing the people across from them. This setting creates an intimate encounter with the dancers in close proximity to the audience. You can see every movement and nuance.



ADELAIDE FESTIVAL 28 Feb - 15 Mar 2020

Between Tiny Cities

រវាងទីក្រុងតូច EDUCATION RESOURCE

CONTENTS

OVERVIEW & WARNINGS

THEMES, PRODUCTION & CURRICULUM

BEFORE THE SHOW

AFTER THE SHOW

ABOUT THE COMPANY

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Curriculum Links and Activities

This education resource is developed with links to the Australian Curriculum. Activities have been created to reflect each of the achievement standards, depending on the year level, including content descriptions within each learning area and the general capabilities. The resource aims to provide teachers with information to help prepare students before attending the performance, as well as structured learning activities for the classroom after viewing the performance.

SACE Stage 1 and 2 – the resources are created with links and in relation to the subject outlines.

Year 7 and 8

In Dance, students:

- explore meaning and interpretation, forms and elements, and social, cultural and historical contexts of dance as they make and respond to dance
- evaluate choreographers' intentions and expressive skills in dances they view and perform
- Analyse how choreographers use elements of dance and production elements to communicate intent ACADAR018
- Identify and connect specific features and purposes of dance from contemporary and past times to explore viewpoints and enrich their dance-making... ACADAR018

Year 9 and 10

- explore meaning and interpretation, forms and elements, and social, cultural and historical contexts of dance as they make and respond to dance
- evaluate dancers' success in expressing the choreographers' intentions and the use of expressive skills in dances they view and perform
- Analyse a range of dance from contemporary and past times to explore differing viewpoints and enrich their dance.... ACADAR025







CONTENTS

OVERVIEW & WARNINGS

THEMES, PRODUCTION & CURRICULUM

BEFORE THE SHOW

AFTER THE SHOW

ABOUT THE COMPANY

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Before the Show

Individually students read:

An interview with Nick Power, the choreographer of Between Tiny Cities, by Dance Informa

The interview explores how he developed his choreographic style, the impact of a residency in Paris on his work, major influencers of his style, and the development of *Between Tiny Cities*.

While reading the article students use the Cornell notes template to identify and list key words and main ideas from the article.

Note: using a Cornell notes template will support students with this process. (simple template provided)

Students select an idea to explore and research.

For example:

- What are B-boys and is there a female equivalent?
- Why has Paris been so influential in the Hip Hop scene?
- How does breakdance give young people a voice?
- What is the social/cultural/historical story behind Tiny Toones in Cambodia?
- Power's mentions the big influencers in his career like Ken Swift, Storm (German B*boy), Tracks Dance and Stalker
 Theatre. Find out more about one of these influencers
- How does Nick Power create and choreograph his dances?
- Where did Breakdancing come from i.e. the history the social and cultural aspects?
- How has Breakdancing changed over time?
- Why is the Olympic Committee thinking of including hip hop in the 2024 Olympic Games?







CONTENTS

OVERVIEW & WARNINGS

THEMES, PRODUCTION & CURRICULUM

BEFORE THE SHOW

AFTER THE SHOW

ABOUT THE COMPANY

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Links for research

Here is a selection of links to give a bit of a head start on the research:

Keywords: history and breakdance

The Freshest Kids: The History of B Boy (2002) (1 hour 36 mins)

The Freshest Kids takes you on a journey of the underground world of B-Boys spanning the last 25 years. See and hear the early history via rare archival footage and exclusive interviews. It provides an insight into the evolution of B-Boy and its place within hip-hop culture and beyond.

History of Breaking Dancing BBoying

Keywords: global influence and breakdance, social and cultural and breakdance

"Breakdance": Breaking global cultural boundaries through dance

The global influence of hip hop and breakdancing in the slums and ghettos

<u>Power of dance: From Cambodian slums to breakdancing</u> in Darwin

Keywords: Paris and breakdance

Paris is the perfect place for Breakdancing

Hip hop culture is big in France; it is now the second largest in the world, after the USA. Since the 1980s, break dancing, rap music, and graffiti have been particularly popular in the often-impoverished "banlieues" outside many major French cities.

Breakdancing takes a big step closer to 2024 Paris Olympic Games after IOC decision

Breakdancing added to Youth Olympic Games 2018

Mourad Merzouki, the ambassador of French hip hop

Street dance moves closer to the Olympic debut at Paris

The Essential Guide to France's Rap and Hip-Hop Artists

<u>Denis Darzacq - photographer</u>

Denis Darzacq is a French photographer. Checkout a series of photographic portraits and a video of young French hip-hop dancers, the photographs capture his subjects mid-leap.

Hip hop and rap giving voice to young Indigenous protest







CONTENTS

OVERVIEW & WARNINGS

THEMES, PRODUCTION & CURRICULUM

BEFORE THE SHOW

AFTER THE SHOW

ABOUT THE COMPANY

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Before the show

Keywords: influencers and Nick Power's career

Stalker Theatre – a long standing multidisciplinary theatre company – mentor to Nick Power

<u>Tracksdance – a dance company located in Darwin that produces original dance works that celebrate an important part of Australian culture</u>

BBoy Ken Swift's Breaklife

Biography of Niels Storm Robitzky

In small groups of 4 to 5 students:

- Students present the research they have undertaken.
- Discuss any similarities or differences they noticed in the presentations.
- One student from each group should note ideas from the group discussion.

Questions to guide group discussions:

- What might be the reason for
- What is going on here?
- What can we conclude from our research?
- What are we still wondering Maybe a BIG question
- What is our take-away from the presentations and discussion?

As a whole class:

Each group presents their notes from their presentations and discussion. Use the same questions the groups used for discussion to guide the whole class discussion.

As a whole class watch

The trailer for Between Tiny Cities on Vimeo - (2mins 20secs)





CONTENTS

OVERVIEW & WARNINGS

THEMES, PRODUCTION & CURRICULUM

BEFORE THE SHOW

AFTER THE SHOW

ABOUT THE COMPANY

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Before the Show

As a whole class watch

Nick Power, Erak Mith and Aaron Lim talking about the development of Between *Tiny Cities* (3 mins)

Nick Power being interviewed about Cypher - August 2015

Performance of Cypher - a previous work of Nick Power's

- Students discuss initial reactions to watching the Between Tiny Cities trailer and Cypher.
- What did they wonder.
- If Nick Power was in the room what questions would they ask him.

The Cypher

For breakers to test themselves the cypher is perfect. Trying new moves, pushing your stamina, using everything you've practised without fear of losing.

In most dancing, you learn in a structured class to copy the moves, but with breaking it's about originality:

- What can you bring to the cypher?
- What is your innovation?
- What is your style?

The importance of the cypher

A cypher in breaking is when B-boys and B-girls form a circle and, one after another, enter into the middle and dance. To dance in a cypher is to **cypher**, or to be **cyphering**.

SACE - Stage 2

Knowledge and Understanding

KU1 Knowledge and understanding of the dance technique of a specific genre.

KU2 Knowledge and understanding of the work of dance artists, locally, nationally, or globally.

Analysis and Evaluation

AE1 Research into, and analysis and interpretation of, historical and contemporary dance works, practice, and issues in context, using different sources.

AE2 Evaluation of the various relationships that interconnect in the process of staging dance.

AE3 Critical review of and reflection on dance, and evaluation of dance processes.

Year 9 and 10

Practise and refine technical skills to develop proficiency in genreand style-specific techniques

ACADAM022

Perform dances using genre- and style-specific techniques and expressive skills to communicate a choreographer's intent ACADAM024





CONTENTS

OVERVIEW & WARNINGS

THEMES, PRODUCTION & CURRICULUM

BEFORE THE SHOW

AFTER THE SHOW

ABOUT THE COMPANY

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Before the Show

Build your moves vocab

Students can build their knowledge of breakdance moves by watching tutorials to get their b-boy and b-girl vocab happening.

Checkout:

Melbourne Breakdance online break dance tutorials

<u>Breakdance Lessons Online</u> provides three basic moves that are broken down into basic move elements..

- 1. 3 Step
- 2. Corkscrew Up
- 3. Baby Freeze.

Students should start with simple routines.

Example of one to try out:

- 2 top rock moves
- Fall into baby freeze few seconds
- Transition into a 3 step
- Baby freeze
- Corkscrew up

Music and moves

The moves the groups develop will be influenced by the music they choose and how they interpret it. This is talked about by dancers as "dance musicality".

Students can observe the difference in interpretation by watching the two following videos. Two different groups develop their moves for the same piece of music.

Group 1

Group 2

Students need to:

- Choose their music
- Listen to the whole piece of music once
- Break down the music into layers listening to one part at a time:
- vocals and lyrics
- ♦ instruments

Dance musicality

Dance musicality is how dancers hear, interpret and dance to music.

As a whole class:

Students rehearse their routines then each group performs in a cypher.

8 basic elements of breakdance

Top rocks - moves done while standing, eg cross step

Go down – goes from top rock down to the floor, eg hook drop Footwork – when you're down on the floor using your hands for

support as using your legs. eg 6 step and 3 step

Freezes – when you hold a shape – full stop at the end of a sequence of moves – usually done to hit a prominent sound, eg baby freeze.

Transitions – moves made to get in + out of moves, eg pretzels.

Power moves – when the body is propelled into continued spinning while balancing on a body part, eg head spins.

Tricks – when you take a conventional step and add a twist to it – your special move.

Flips – usually happens between power moves, tricks or freezes.





CONTENTS

OVERVIEW & WARNINGS

THEMES, PRODUCTION & CURRICULUM

BEFORE THE SHOW

AFTER THE SHOW

ABOUT THE COMPANY

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

After the show

Individually students:

- Write down their initial thoughts after seeing Between Tiny Cities.
- Do you have questions for the choreographer or dancers.

Links to examples of other reviews:

Breakdancing crews brings their unique style to the theatre

'B-Boys' From Different Worlds Hit the Dance Floor Together - March 31, 2017

Between Tiny Cities - Dance Reviews Melbourne

Nick Power's Between Tiny Cities: The Power of Two

Questions to get you thinking:

- Consider the movement style, costumes, music, set and lighting
- How did the performance make you feel?
- Can you identify where in the performance you had that feeling?
- Were there any culturally symbolic movements you could identify?

Students use the – Guide for Writing a Dance Critique – to plan their critique

Tips and reminders for students when writing their critique:

- Don't forget when you are expressing an opinion you have to back it up.
 You can't just say it was awesome! Discuss the execution of the moves, the relationship between the dancers. Describe don't tell.
- Reread, edit, and have someone else read your critique before you print.







Between Tiny Cities រវាងទីក្រុងតូច education resource

CONTENTS

OVERVIEW & WARNINGS

THEMES, PRODUCTION & CURRICULUM

BEFORE THE SHOW

AFTER THE SHOW

ABOUT THE COMPANY

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Meet the company

Nick Power - Choreographer

Nick Power is a Sydney based b*boy and choreographer. He is one of the leading hip hop dance artists in Australia, working professionally for the past 17 years. Since starting out in Brisbane running his own dance space Nick has nurtured young and emerging dancers through workshop projects with organisations including Contact Inc, Stylin Up Indigenous hip hop festival and Schools Spectacular. He has worked extensively in regional centres and in the remote Indigenous community of Lajamanu on the Milpirri project. Over the past 20 years he has curated grass roots, medium and large scale hip hop dance events working with some of Australia's most significant venues and festivals including Carriageworks, Sydney Festival, Darwin Festival and Brisbane City Council. His dance work has toured throughout Australia, Europe, Asia and Central America and he has worked with companies such as Tracks Inc and Stalker Theatre. Nick was the recipient of the Australia Council dance residency at the Cite Internationale des Arts in Paris 2012 which inspired his first full length independent work Cypher. The work premiered at Darwin Festival in 2014 and toured to Europe and throughout Australia in 2015.

Aaron Lim - Dancer

Aaron Lim is a Darwin born b*boy who has been breaking since 2007. He developed his skills through taking part in a range of programs at Tracks Dance Company, performing in their yearly festivals including Struck, Cook Queen Kelly and Zombies in the Banyan Tree. Aaron has a long-standing relationship with international renowned b*boy and choreographer Nick Power. He has undertaken a range of activities with Nick including attending key dance events in Sydney and undertaken a

mentorship in South Korea while Nick created a new work with Stalker Theatre. From this Aaron has begun to develop his own choreographic practice undertaking a residency at Tracks Dance in 2016. Aaron has also been teaching since 2010 in schools and with Corrugated Iron Youth Arts and within Indigenous communities with Artback NT. Aaron competes in battles with his crew D*City Rockers including Platform 4 (Sydney), Battle at the Lighthouse (Darwin), and Radikal forze Jam (Singapore). Aaron Lim has participated in the Cambodian and Australian Hip Hop Exchange for the last three years.

Erak Mith - Dancer

Erak Mith is a Phnom Penh b*boy who developed his craft at Tiny Toones School. He started dancing at the age of 8, supported by Artistic Director and General Manager KK and Shhort. Erak has worked with some of the leading hip-hop choreographers in the world presenting work in Europe and Australasia. Erak has participated in the Cambodian and Australian Hip Hop Exchange for the last three years. He also a teacher and mentor at Tiny Toones and Phnom Penh International Schools providing dance workshops for young people from 5 - 15 years.







Between Tiny Cities រវាងទីក្រុងតូច education resource

CONTENTS

OVERVIEW & WARNINGS

THEMES, PRODUCTION & CURRICULUM

BEFORE THE SHOW

AFTER THE SHOW

ABOUT THE COMPANY

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Meet the company

Jack Prest - Sound Designer

With a background as a conceptual artist and electronic music performer Jack Prest is a senior engineer at Studios 301, Australia's largest recording facility, and a freelance music producer/sound design-er/composer. Jack's engineering credits extend to Bruce Springsteen, The Preatures, Jonti, Sampa The Great, Flume, Urthboy, Santpoort, Donatachi, Godtet and Golden Vessel. He works extensively as a composer and sound designer for theatre, dance and film, with highlights including Branch Nebula's 2013 Helpmann Award winning Whelping Box (and its film adaptation), surround sound mix for Blak Box (Sydney Festival 2019) and his work on Nick Power projects including Two Crews and Between Tiny Cities, 2018 Australian Dance and Green Room Award nominee.

Lee Wilson - Dramaturg

Lee Wilson is a co-director of Branch Nebula with Mirabelle Wouters. Branch Nebula works across disciplines in performance, dance and design to challenge mainstream cultural conventions. They work with non-conventional performers to collaboratively devise work that defies categorization. They interrogate the audience experience and explore contemporary culture as a means of creating access and speaking to a broad audience. They work with street-style artists to create new visions for engaging with street-styles like BMX, skating, parkour, tricking and contemporary dance. Most recently, Branch Nebula premiered DEMO on a set of portable skate ramps in Sydney's Customs House Square for Art and About. Previously, High Performance Packing Tape was commissioned by Performance Space for Liveworks 2018, and since toured to Homo Novus Festival in Riga Lativia, returning to Sydney Opera House and Melbourne Festival seasons (2019), and Adelaide Festival 2020.

Branch Nebula toured Snake Sessions to skate parks around Australia in 2017. In 2016 they curated *SWARM* for Campbelltown Art Centre's live art program, and were commissioned to create *Food Fight* for C3West and Liverpool Council. In 2015 they premiered *Artwork*, and the *Whelping Box* Film at the 24 Frames Per Second Exhibition, both commissioned by Carriageworks, and collaborated with Wade Marynowsky on the Robot Opera for Performance Space's Liveworks festival.

Bosco Shaw - Lighting Designer

Bosco Shaw works primarily as a Lighting and Set Designer. His interest is in work that involves bodies & movement, how light feeds & influences the performing space and collaborations that propose alternate light sources and means. He has worked for companies and festivals in Australia and around the world. Recent design projects include: Antony Hamilton – *Meeting*, Tim Darbyshire - *Stampede the Stampede*, Dance North - Syncing Feeling, 3 dancers, IF_Was_, Daniel Jaber/ADT – Nought, Chunky Move - *It Cannot Be Stopped*, Keir Choreographic Awards 2015 - Tim Darbyshire, Atlanta Eke, Woodford Folk Festival 2015-16 - Opening and Fire Ceremonies, Matthew Sleeth - *A Drone Opera*, Stephanie Lake - *Double Blind*, Luke George - *Erotic Dance*, XO State - Asia TOPA & Dance North - *Attractor*.







CONTENTS

OVERVIEW & WARNINGS

THEMES, PRODUCTION & CURRICULUM

BEFORE THE SHOW

AFTER THE SHOW

ABOUT THE COMPANY

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Additional resources

Berlin 24/7: Breakdance as a symbol of freedom

There it is again, that sense of freedom via dance. Apart from a few basic steps, every dancer is free to find his own style. "We always enjoyed that, and it's the reason why breakdance has developed over the past 25 years," says Mikel, who is energized like a teenager.

Why Paris is the perfect city to introduce breakdancing to the Olympics

Breakdancing sees a global resurgence

Why do Koreans love breakdancing

Video on the BBC story page - interviews South Koreans about their love of breakdancing (3mins 20 secs)

Breakdancing is still relevant to hip hop and its youth

The Othered Paris

Beethoven - Breakdance, Contemporary and Classical dancers combine - well known German Breakdancer Khaled Chaabi

NT News - Breakdancing building ties between Darwin and Cambodia crews

"Dancers Erak Mith, from Phnom Penh, and Aaron Lim, from Darwin, use the rituals, movement styles and language of their shared hip-hop culture to explore their different cultures and uncover the choreographic links that unite them."

<u>Information about Tiny Toones - Cambodia - Tiny Toones Youth Centre 2016 (5mins 17secs)</u> Find out more about Tiny Toones - how it started and what it does.

Hip Hop in Cambodia | Tiny Toones Organization (9min48secs)

Tiny Toones is an organization that brings kids off the streets and provides them with a positive learning environment. Many of these kids do not have the opportunity to go to school, so here they learn English, Khmer, Math and the best part is that they learn about Hip Hop. Tiny Toones provides a Breaking program where kids get a chance to release their creative energy, gain confidence, social skills and much more.

The Future of Khmer Hip-Hop - Tiny Toones Cambodia

Cambodian - Tiny Toones



Guide for Writing a Dance Critique



Guide IVI	wiiting	a Dance	Ortuque	
Opening Paragraph				

Opening Paragraph		
When		Language Features: Usually in past tense
What		Uses subject-specific language Descriptive language Third person voice
Where		 Analytical language Modality (how certain we are about something Cast and crew referred to by their full names o
Performance		last name In text references (quotes or specific moment:
Overview of the production and the intent of the choreographer		
The artistic contributors – choreographer, dancers, set designer, lighting, costume		
1st Paragraph - Movement and choreography	2nd Paragraph - Space an	d staging
What movements did you observe?	How did the dancers move through space?	
What was the structure of the dance?	Where did the movement occur?	
How did the dancers relate to each other?		
What were the technical and expressive abilities of the dancers?	Did the lighting focus or distract? Were the costumes appropriate?	
Were the dancers focussed and energetic?		
3rd Paragraph - Music	Concluding Paragraph - S	ummarises the viewers opinion
Was the music fast or slow?	How did it make you feel? What did you learn from the dance?	
	What did the dance communicate to you? What stood out the most?	
How did the music add to the dance?	Did the dance create any questions	
	for you?	