

## Rachel Jean Birch

Mon 24 - Fri 28 Oct 2011



### The Approach

This residency involved the four main members of the company, Rachel Jean Birch, Cheryl Gill, Hannah Marshall and Katherine Lillicrap, as well as guest dancer and local artist Silja Thomsen.

The purpose of the residency was to begin the research and development process of our new, as yet untitled, piece. We began by discussing our stimuli at length and developing tasks which would provoke the movement and responses we anticipate the work to produce visually. Our concept is based around the 'four minute warning' and how this window of time in all its contexts can be presented.

We chose to fragment the work into four four- minute short works, which have the versatility to be performed in any location, be it in a traditional setting or site specific, as well as be combined in any configuration like a jigsaw puzzle. We intend to create four separate entities, which can stand alone or become whole, depending on which motive we implement.

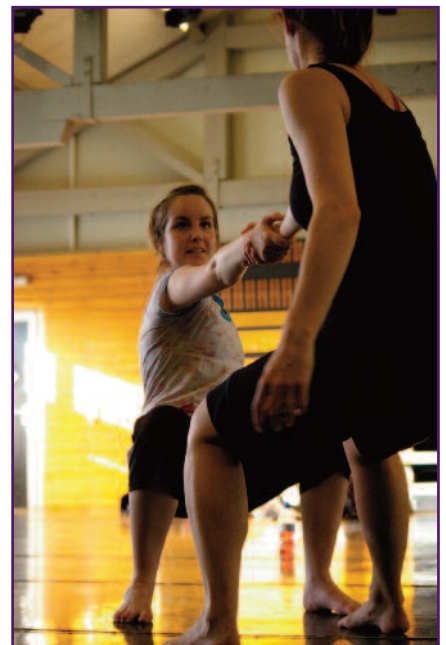
We are also in discussion with a costume designer who is eager to commission a piece that challenges the dancers to move in accord with the costume, and how that can co-exist within our concept.

### How the residency at Yorkshire Dance supported our ongoing artistic practise and creative development?

The word *ongoing* signifies our fantastic relationship with Yorkshire Dance and their generous investment in us as artists to have us back twice in a year to continue our work. The residencies are an important time for us to focus our creative process and make great progress in the studio. Our aim as a company is to build a repertoire of work and to experiment with new ideas, and Yorkshire Dance gives us this opportunity. Being based in Newcastle it is great to explore our work in new surroundings and to give new light to our company's aspirations. We also have the chance to collaborate with artists from the local area and to build connections between the North east and Yorkshire. The *Friday Firsts*

programme is a great initiative and we hope to apply in future to include our current work in progress.

Throughout our residency we felt welcome in Yorkshire Dance's great building which is always full of friendly staff and fellow dance makers. Yorkshire Dance is a highly professional organisation with the best interests of the artists at heart. They have generously awarded us two weeks' worth of space in kind to develop ourselves as artists and the work of our emerging company, as well as include us in their performance platform, all of which have been invaluable to us.



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