**Alice in Californiland**

**World Premier October 2019**

**Choreographer:** Arthur Pita  
**Rehearsal Director:** Sonsherée Giles  
**Dancers:** Bradford Chin, Lani Dickinson, AJ Guevara, Yuko Monden Juma, DeMarco Sleeper, and JanpiStar  
**Design:** Yann Seabra  
**Music:** *California Dreaming* by Jose Feliciano  
*La Valse, un Poème Choréographique* by ORF Radio Symphony Orchestra  
**Sound Design:** Ben Juodvalkis  
**Lighting Design:** Allen Willner  
**Set Construction:** Gigantic Factory

**Summary**

For over thirty years, AXIS has been headquartered in downtown Oakland, now the epicenter of gentrification, displacement, and homelessness in the Bay Area. To respond to, and create dialogue around these realities AXIS will produce its biggest production to date with Arthur Pita’s *Alice in Californiland*. Bringing his vast experience of entwining storytelling, dance, and theater to life, Pita will creatively react to the realities of rampant displacement through the lens of Alice in Wonderland. A fearless visual storyteller, Pita’s disturbing, nightmarish story will sit in a kaleidoscopic world of harsh reality and psychedelic fantasy in equal measure. Together, Pita and his long-time collaborator set and costume designer Yann Seabra have developed an aesthetic that effectively reaches audiences and invites them to look deeper at social issues and question our culture and society.
“When I got the opportunity to work with AXIS, I thought it was the perfect opportunity to express this complex issue, but also to set it in a world which could juxtapose the harsh realities, which made me ask questions about reality itself,” says Pita. “AXIS Dance Company is a daring and important organization that has encouraged me to go on this journey and the dancers are wonderfully talented — I am thrilled to go on this voyage with them.”

—Arthur Pita

Collaborators

Arthur Pita, Choreographer for Alice in Californiland is London-based choreographer who works internationally. He studied dance in Johannesburg and earned a master’s degree at the London Contemporary Dance School. He is artistic director for his own company Ballo Arthur Pita. Works include God’s Garden, The Little Match Girl, The World’s Greatest Show, Stepfather Stepfather (five National Dance Award nominations) and Ten Sorry Tales. He has collaborated on opera’s, theatre and films for companies such as: Royal Opera House, Donmar Warehouse, Royal Shakespeare Company, Los Angeles Opera, Royal National Theatre, Teatro Real Madrid, Royal Albert Hall, DNA Films, and recently Charlie’s Angels for Sony Pictures. Commissions include The Stepfather (Candoco Dance Company), Death Defying Dances (Body Traffic), Casse Noisette (Paris Opera Ballet), A Dream Within a Midsummer Night’s Dream (Ballet Black, Olivier Award nomination), The Wind (Royal Ballet), Salome and Björk Ballet (San Francisco Ballet). He has also created specially commissioned works for ballet stars including: Ivan Vasiliev, Sergei Polunin, Natalia Osipova, (Facada, Run Mary Run, The Mother), Thiagio Soares (La Bala), Irek Mukhamedov (Jingling from the Zills), Edward Watson and Wendy Whelan (The Ballad of Mack and Ginny), James Whiteside (The Tenant), Sarah Lamb, Maria Kowroski, Robbie Fairchild (Cristaux) and The Metamorphosis for Edward Watson (Olivier Award nomination, South Bank Award and National Dance Award). To learn more about Arthur, visit: www.arthurpita.com
Yann Seabra, Designer for *Alice in Californiland* is a Stage and Costume Designer based in London, having designed extensively with leading directors in dance, opera and films and TV for companies worldwide. For over 15 years he worked as a Dancer with companies such as Ballet Stagium, Companhia Portuguesa de Bailado Contemporâneo and Phoenix Dance Theatre. Yann went on to train in theatre design at the renowned Motley Theatre Design Group in London. Some of his work include: *rouge* by Marion Motin for RAMBERT, *The Mother* with Natalia Osipova, *The Wind* (The Royal Ballet), *Salome* (San Francisco Ballet), *Death Defying Dancers* (Bodytraffic, Los Angeles), *The Little Match Girl, Stepmother Stepfather, La Bala* (Thiago Soares Brazil), and works by Arthur Pita. Design commissions for opera include designing for *The Poisoned Kiss* at New Sussex Opera and *Hugh the Drover* at Cadogan Hall, London. Design commissions for film include: Sean Spencer’s *Panic*, nominated for Best British Feature Film, Raindance Film Festival 2014, *Palestine Lost* (2012), *Consumed* (2012), *Follow* (2011) and *The Snowman*, a book trailer for Jo Nesbo’s novel (2010). Seabra also designed for *The Confession*, a short film nominated for an Academy Award in 2010.

Ben Juodvalkis, Sound Designer for *Alice in Californiland* composes original music for dance, film, theater, corporate events, and museum installations. He has created scores for over 50 organizations and has had his music performed on four continents. Ben works from his studio in San Francisco as well as on location with his mobile custom built electronic instruments.

Allen Willner, Lighting Designer for *Alice in Californiland* is an award winning lighting designer for theater, dance and music. Awards and nominations include: Isadora Duncan Dance Awards for the lighting design of inkBoat’s *Line Between*, *Heaven’s Radio* and Deborah Slater’s *Private Life*. Nominations for Isadora Duncan Dance Awards for the Visual Designs of Erika Chong Shuch’s *51802* and inkBoat’s *Cockroach*. 2016 TBA Award Lighting Design Nominations for Shotgun Player’s *Eurydice* and 2013 Theater of Yugen’s *This Lingering Life*. Bay Area Critics Circle Lighting Design Nomination for The Shotgun Players *Eurydice* and *God’s Ear*. 2012 Broadway World Lighting and Set Design Nomination for Symmetry Theater’s *Patience Worth*. Lighting Artists in Dance Awards for inkBoat’s *Line Between*, Erika Chong Shuch’s *Sitting in a Circle*, Laura Arrington & Jesse Hewitt’s *Adult*.
**AXIS Dance Company** exists to redefine dance & disability. Founded in 1987, AXIS is the nation's most acclaimed ensemble of performers with and without disabilities. Based in Oakland, CA, AXIS' list of collaborators includes Bill T. Jones, Stephen Petronio, Yvonne Rainer, Ann Carlson, David Dorfman, Marc Brew, Meredith Monk, Joan Jeanrenaud and Fred Frith. AXIS has toured to over 100 cities in the US, Europe and Russia. The Company has received seven Isadora Duncan Dance Awards and has appeared twice on FOX TV's So You Think You Can Dance, exposing their important and relevant work of physically integrated dance to millions. Through education and outreach programs thousands of children and adults of all ages and abilities are inspired to dance each year. www.axisdance.org