

Tanya MacNaughton

WA Ballet's 2019 season of *Giselle* played a huge part in inspiring choreographer Melanie Lane's new work, *Slow Haunt*, part of the company's new annual bill of contemporary ballet, *STATE*, and fittingly succeeding an encore season of *Giselle* in May.

It was the first time the Melbourne-based WAAPA graduate had seen the company perform as a full ensemble, despite having collaborated with them and former Australian Ballet dancer Juliet Burnett on their gala tour to Jakarta in 2016.

"As soon as I saw the ballet (*Giselle*), all these memories came flooding back from when I'd performed the work as a very young ballet student," the Javanese-Australian choreographer said.

"I had been fascinated by these figures of the underworld, the *wilis*, and thought ghostly characters would be an interesting space to draw upon with the idea of an underworld ballet. In films we see stories about jilted lovers suspended in the underworld and there are a lot of folkloric tales across so many different cultures; it felt like a really universal realm to conjure as a ballet."

It was also not lost on Lane — who has transitioned to doing more



Haunted state

WAAPA graduate and Melbourne-based choreographer Melanie Lane pictured with WA Ballet dancers in *Slow Haunt*. Picture: Andrew Ritchie

choreography than performing since the start of COVID-19 — that ballet dancing itself was somewhat supernatural as

dancers defy gravity with an ethereal quality while enduring intensive training and pain. She then simplified the

concept by turning to the idea of being lovesick while depicting the themes of desire and vengeance in the 25-minute piece featuring

eight dancers. "I kind of imagine the work being an army of lovesick bodies, oscillating between seeking desire and

sensuality but also resistance and rage at the same time," 43-year-old Lane said.

Lane's husband, UK digital music creator Chris Clark (aka CLARK) has composed the soundtrack for *Slow Haunt*, continuing the couple's long collaborative relationship.

"He's just come out of composing the score for the new Stephen King series, *Lisey's Story*," she said.

"It's kind of a similar realm, so he came out with all the inspiration from that world to inject into this one; it's quite good timing.

"The music always develops together with the choreography, so it's not like he creates the score and then I choreograph to it. He develops lots of fragments of ideas and then I work with him in the studio where we go back and forth and he'll adjust as the choreography evolves.

"I want to leave audiences haunted."

Slow Haunt is part of a triple bill that includes a 45-minute excerpt of Australian choreographer Graeme Murphy's *Air and Other Invisible Forces* plus *Gainsbourg* by WA Ballet dancer Adam Alzaim, a regular contributor to the company's choreographic showcase, *Genesis*.

STATE is at Heath Ledger Theatre, State Theatre Centre of WA, June 24 to July 3. Visit waballet.com.au.

Wander with books yonder



Children's author Norman Jorgensen with Writing WA chief executive Sharon Flindell and Rachel Bin Salleh from Magabala Books at the Love to Read Local Literary Map of WA launch. Picture: ILKKA K Photography

Tanya MacNaughton

Sharon Flindell loves to travel and is forever seeking out literature to help her understand more about the history, culture and people of the place she is visiting.

Certain she was not alone in this, the Writing WA chief executive — WA's peak writing and publishing organisation —

set about to create a project bringing travellers and readers together.

The result was the new Love to Read Local Literary Map of WA.

"When you head to the website you can access content searching by destination, so if you were planning a trip to Broome, log into the map, select Broome and then it will take you to books that have

a connection to that place," Flindell, of East Victoria Park, said.

"You can search by the specific destination or by region if you are thinking more broadly.

"The obvious example everyone understands is following the Tim Winton track from Albany to the Coral Coast, and as you travel, read his books and immerse yourself in those

landscapes and places that have inspired him as an author."

Curation of the literary map started just over a year ago through collaboration with Key2Creative and consultation with various stakeholders from WA's writing and publishing sector.

Find the Love to Read Local Literary Map of WA at lovetoreadlocal.org.

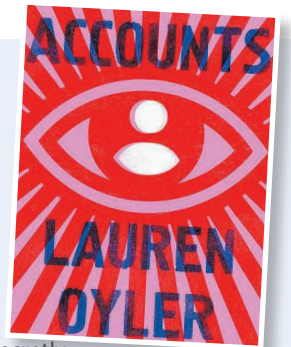
BWB

FAKE ACCOUNTS

LAUREN OYLER (HARPERCOLLINS \$29.99)

A 20-something millennial living in New York thinks her boyfriend Felix is cheating on her, but while snooping on his phone she discovers something much worse: he is secretly running a conspiracy theory account on Instagram. With a narrative voice steeped in sardonic self-awareness that blurs the line between the unnamed protagonist and the author herself, *Fake Accounts* examines the way we construct our persona online and how this translates to the real world. We can be whoever we want on the internet with very little consequence, but what happens if you take the same approach to your IRL interactions?

LUCY RUTHERFORD



THIS IS NOT A BOOK!

KELLIE BYRNES AND ASKA (EXISLE PUBLISHING, \$24.99)

Children's book authors have often tell me their publications can take just as much time to condense a well-developed idea into limited space as it does to write a novel. This difficult task has been delivered in *This is NOT a Book!* The sophisticated read by Kellie Byrnes, recommended for children aged four to eight years, introduces the concept of metafiction to young audiences as it teaches them the structure and construct of a book. Perth illustrator Aska has captured the adventure-filled mayhem of the story with bright, colourful and imaginative illustrations that feature everything from angry mermaids and hungry lions to swashbuckling cats. It is a page-turner, even if the lead character tries to deny the very existence of its pages.

TANYA MACNAUGHTON

