

WHY?

By Gravity & Levity



*"A tour de force of aerial performance,
delivering emotional truth in every beat"*

Bradley Hemmings, Artistic Director, Greenwich & Docklands International Festival 2020

Commissioned by Norwich & Norfolk Festival. Re-creation with generous support from the Arts Council England, The Point, Fidget Feet and the Irish Aerial Creation Centre; and with thanks to Attenborough Centre for the Creative Arts and The Spire, Brighton.

The show



Why? is both a tender and exhilarating aerial duet exploring themes of life, loss, surrender and acceptance in a soft and moving way.

The show is an abseiling duet performed on a custom-built vertical ground-supported truss structure, or other similar pre-existing structure (e.g. a suitable wall, building). It can be performed outdoors or indoors.

The **promotional trailer** filmed at Greenwich & Docklands International Festival 2020 is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3FoBSQld6ok&feature=youtu.be>.

"a fully formed work, presented with great control and technical ability by the two performers to a great score, this music catching and reflecting the shifting emotional arc of the work as the performers explored and crossed the limits of their own vertical circles."

Bill Gee, Producer, IF Milton Keynes International Festival, Inside Out Dorset Festival, Bloomsbury Festival

"At a time when the mere sight of two people touching in any context can be a challenging proposition, Gravity and Levity's work proves to be both engaging, sensitive, and timely... as an aerial piece, audiences are able to watch and engage with 'Why?' from a distance and in separation - both helpful for programmers, and curiously reflective of the content."

Angus MacKechnie, Executive Director, Outdoor Arts UK



The Creative Team

Performers	Lindsey Butcher & Lee Clayden
Choreographer	Fin Walker
Composer	Ben Park
Writer	Ed Harris
Design	Steel the Scene
Lighting Design	Lucy Carter
Costumes	Original Ben Maher, Re-worked by Holly Murray
Actors	Nick Holder & Ricky Butt
Production Manager	Lee Kennedy

About Gravity & Levity

Award-winning company Gravity & Levity was launched in 2003 by Artistic Director, Lindsey Butcher, to explore the creative and expressive potential of applying a dance aesthetic to aerial suspension techniques, through artistic development, teaching and live productions.

Gravity & Levity exists to develop and maximise the creative potential of artists and audience imagination. We strive to create and present innovative aerial dance that redefines what and where a dance floor can be both for an audience and for ourselves. We present work that is accessible, relevant and offers an alternative perspective on traditional aesthetics in both dance and circus.

@GravityLevity

www.gravity-levity.net

Technical information

Running time:	22 minutes. There is no interval.
Performances/day:	The show can be performed twice per day
On the road:	2 Performers, 2 Aerial Riggers, 1 Production Manager
Get-in:	Ideally the day before performances take place (site must be secure overnight)
Get-out:	After performances (to be discussed if evening performances to ensure adequate light)
Stage/Space:	<p>Why? is an abseiling duet performed on a custom-built vertical ground-supported truss structure, or other similar a structure (e.g. suitable wall, building) 8m high by 7.72m wide and 8.72m deep.</p> <p>A site-visit or detailed technical plans will be required.</p>
Using our Truss:	<p>Our custom-built structure is a free-standing construction. The ballast toured comprises 12 x 12.5 kg stage weights, (150 kgs), distributed evenly along the length of the truss feet, or placed directly under the dance floors. This combined with compression bracing and tensioned guys on the truss give the structure a tolerance of up to 25mph/11mps winds i.e. Force 5. Where possible it is further stabilised with additional staked guy lines guy lines and ballast.</p> <p>Please request full engineering spec for more details - should the performance site require a higher tolerance this <u>must</u> be discussed in advance with the company.</p>

Booker to provide:

- A flat, level stage surface to build the ground-supported truss structure
- ballast or weights
- 8m of clearance overhead if indoors and a footprint of 9m square
- If necessary, we can reduce our footprint to 8m but must be notified in advance

We will provide:

- All lines, harnesses and performer rigging equipment
- Aerial rigging truss and abseil dance floor/wall
- Supalifts and LX (as required)

Using pre-existing structure:

A site-visit must be booked to ensure suitability.

The booker must ensure structural soundness, surface suitability, sufficient power for lighting and sound, suitable audience sightlines and access, all prevail. This sometimes may necessitate either a duplicate set-up indoors for bad weather considerations, or simply a cancellation.

We need to site 3 rigging points for 4 abseiling lines at a maximum of 400mm from the vertical plane of the front of the wall. **This is critical – variations of this alter the arc of swing and render the performance impossible.** The 3 points are: 1 centre of the wall for 2 lines; 1 point each 1500mm either side of the centre for a single line each.

The combined weight of both performers is 140kg.

Booker to provide:

- suitable vertical surface with the ability to rig points overhead
- ballast or weights

We will provide:

- All lines, harnesses, and performer rigging equipment
- Supalifts and LX (as required)

Sound and AV:

Show music plays a significant part in the narrative of the work, and will work to create an intimacy with our audience, drawing them into the narrative and the close up detail. It is vital that the audience hear the sound clearly, which may require additional delay speakers alongside the main L&R plus subs. An example system would be 4 x D&B V-sub8s plus 4 x D&B V8s.

Booker to provide:

- A high quality stereo sound system with independent sub control (L, R, sub L, sub R) adequate for the size of space and expected audience, free from buzz, hiss or mains hum of any sort
- Suitable delays
- 2 x sub bass speakers (2 pairs)
- 2 x foldback monitors are required for directly under the abseil wall for the performers – 1 each side
- Sound desk with 4 outputs plus 4 aux sends
- Covered control position (e.g. gazebo with 3 walls)

We will provide:

- Laptop & sound card for audio playback

Lighting:

Lucy Carter's bespoke outdoor lighting design lifts and highlights the dancers on the wall adding depth to the overall narrative. The design works well for both day and night-time shows.

Booker to provide:*

- 3 x 16A, single-phase power outputs as close to the ground supported truss as possible

We will provide:

- 4 x Showline SL Strip 400 RGBW LED Battens (IP65) (16A) (UN)
- 9 x Elation Six PAR 200IP LED (IP65) (16A) (UN)
- All Rigging and safety bonds for above equipment
- ETC Nomad lighting control via 5-pin DMX or RJ45
- 2 x 10m 16A power extension
- 2 x 5m 16A power extension
- 10 x 3m 16A power extension
- 1 x 20m 5 pin DMX Male - Female data cable
- 4 x 5m 5 pin DMX male – Female data cable
- 10 x 3m 5 pin DMX Male - Female data cable

The touring production manager will operate sound & lights together and requires control for each to be next to each other and with clear line of sight to the performers, which may require a rostra or similar – if this is not feasible, please advise as soon as possible.

Dressing room:

One dressing room is required with hot and cold running water and mirrors, kettle and tea, etc. plus access to showers.

Parking:

Free parking for one Luton or long wheel based van plus one car is required at the theatre/on-site from the evening before the get-in until the morning after the get-out.

Risk Assessment:

A full risk assessment will be made available at the earliest opportunity, and at least 2 weeks before the performance.

Covid-safe:

Why? is a covid-safe performance. When performed outdoors, audiences can be socially distanced.

Audiences would be managed by the presenting organisation or festival.

Gravity & Levity follow government advice. Due to the intimate nature of the choreography, the cast isolate together in preparation for performances and travel separately to the crew.

Performance Licence:

The booker is responsible for obtaining any necessary local performance licences and/or permissions.

Accessibility:

Performances are fully accessible and can be BSL interpreted and audio described. Please ask us for further details.

Contacts

Artistic Director:

Lindsey Butcher
+44 (0)7970 968069
info@gravity-levity.net

Producer/Tour Booker:

Lucy Smith
+44 (0)7855 943 314
lucyonthenet@googlemail.com

Touring Production Manager:

Lee Kennedy
+44 (0)7716375928
360leekennedy@gmail.com