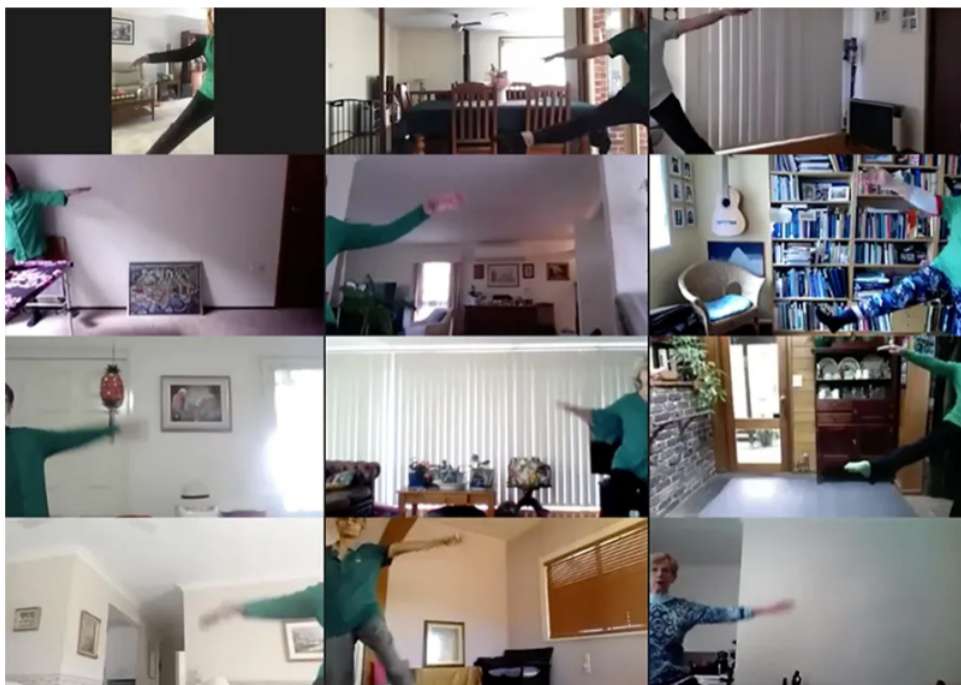




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Together We Dance

Tags: AGEING, DANCE, PERFORMANCE, VIDEOS



During the Covid-19 lockdown, 20 women over 65 from Western Sydney met once a week to dance and make a short ZOOM film together. FORM Dance Projects and Creative Caring embarked on this screen dance project over 10 weeks to share stories that inspire, create awareness and bring about change.

Animated by the unstoppable desire to keep dancing despite the abrupt ending of studio classes due to the Covid-19 lockdown, they met weekly every Tuesday, from their homes – switching on Zoom to dance together and record their moves under the direction of independent dance artist and filmmaker, Diane Busuttill.

Joined by the Penrith-based seniors dance group 'Agile not Fragile,' FORM's Feisty Femmes joyfully opened themselves to "Zoom choreography," experimenting with colour and simple moves including AC/DC inspired head banging!

Busuttill says, "The personal motivation of my work always deals with women and/or feminist issues and often uses humour as a communicative tool. My creative objectives for 'Together We Dance' were two-fold – creating group movement ideas and choreography specifically for the frame."

Through astute editing of class recordings, the creative manipulation of Zoom split screens, Busuttill and Abigail Portman have not only created a moving testimony to the lockdown experienced by our seniors during Covid-19, but demonstrated how essential creativity has been to keep us together.

The result is a short film, in which the women's words shine and their bodies tell the beauty of

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...maturity, collectively and individually. They found, through dance, a language to offer us all a message of courage and optimism. As Riri Treweek said, "I've learnt that we may not be here tomorrow but we are here today so we might as well dance."

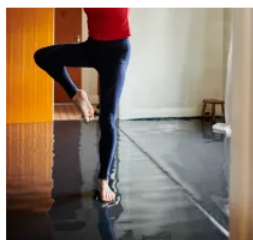
Read Diane's paper about Together We Dance for the International Journal of Screendance [here](#).



Creative Director: Diane Busuttil / Choreography: Diane Busuttil and dancers / Editor: Abigail Portwin / Audio: Mix Dean Mackie / Agile not Fragile lead teacher: Fiona James / Coordinator: Joe Ibbitson / Producer: FORM Dance Projects

Together We Dance participants: Ann Finlay, Carolyn Firth, Cheryl Harris, Deborah Martin, Debra Harslett, Deidre Macfarlane, Denise Miel, Dianne Lewis, Editha Haarman, Helena Jaksic, Kalarani Vellamy, Marie Hotschilt, Twinkle Arokiasamy

Agile not Fragile dancers: Fiona James, Ilse Hillermann, Kathy Sullivan, Lynne Darcy, Merryn



Diane Busuttil celebrating the joy of dance

Diane Busuttil

Diane studied dance at the University of Western Sydney and has a Masters Degree from Macquarie University. She worked internationally as an independent artist, collaborating with a diverse range of dance, theatre, circus & opera companies in the capacity of dancer, acrobat, teacher, choreographer, mentor & director for over 30 years. Diane believes dance and storytelling are strong devices that unite all communities.

Abigail Portwin

Through film, Abi Portwin aims to tell meaningful stories, beautifully. Photography first sewed the seeds for her love of creating compositions, and she began working with the moving image through video art and video installation, editing and shooting. She has continued to explore telling stories through film and video over the last 15 years. Abi ongoingly feels grateful for the opportunity of creative collaboration, and to express her passion to tell stories that inspire, create awareness, give joy and bring about change.

FORM Dance Projects

Based in Parramatta, FORM is a presenter and producer of Australian independent dance. FORM's program spans four key areas – presentation and producing, education, community engagement and audience development. The interconnectedness of these activities is vital for a wider appreciation of Australian dance culture in a shifting contemporary context.

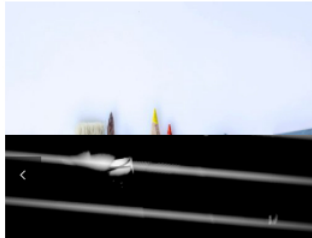
Together we dance was supported by a NSW Government initiative to combat isolation for seniors during Covid-19
Feature Image: Screen Shot from Together We Dance

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