



VDT *UNDERWORLD*, live in Leeds, 2012

COMPANY HISTORY

Since 1994, Vincent Dance Theatre has produced over 26 productions, including large ensemble works, smaller duets, trios and solos, video and film installations, interactive digital installations, short films and publications. Company works are conceived, designed and directed by Artistic Director Charlotte Vincent, who also produces the work with the VDT staff team. You can find details of all our work at www.vincentdt.com.

Based in Sheffield (Yorkshire) from 1994-2013, Artistic Director Charlotte Vincent relocated the company to Brighton (East Sussex) in 2013, supported by Arts Council England and VDT's Board of Directors. This geographical move marked a strategic and creative shift for the company, from an established 'middle scale' touring company with an associated programme of participation work, to a company that distributes thought-provoking, socially engaged [productions](#) on stage, on **film** and **online** that everyone can relate to.

Through our community engaged processes, VDT embeds marginalised voices and integrates non-professional young people into our professional live and film based production work and through doing so now reaches a wider and genuinely more diverse audience than conventional 'middle scale touring' ever allowed. Interrogating who we are and how we live fosters dialogue, debate and encourages empathy and understanding of 'other'. The work aims to empower everyone involved, affect change and give voice to those whose 'value' is often overlooked, specifically vulnerable, young people and women.

With our digital presence and film-based installation and online work, the company is well placed to develop resources in the post Covid-19 era and will be creating further online resources in 2020/21.

VDT's productions make significant claims for gender politics, and increasingly for social change. Productions are formed from a socially engaged research process and accompanied by a wide range

of [Participation](#) activity, including; [Professional Development](#), [Social Engagement](#), [Teaching & Learning](#) and [Dialogue & Debate](#).

Vincent also [mentors](#) a range of emerging and mid-career artists, and is widely acknowledged for supporting [parenting in performing arts](#) and campaigning for gender equality through all the company's work, both on and off the stage.

Click the link to hear Charlotte Vincent talking about [The Next Four Years \(2018-2022\)](#)

VDT is a National Portfolio Organisation, funded by [Arts Council England](#) and based in Brighton, UK. VDT is also a Dream Artist at Pavilion Dance South West and an Associate Company at [Brighton Dome](#).

THE COMPANY

'Funny, fearless and flintily determined, Vincent inspires unshakable loyalty in her dancers, and is one of the most important feminist artists working in Britain today. Contemporary dance fans should beat a path to her door.' **Luke Jennings, The Observer**

Charlotte Vincent graduated in English Literature and Drama from Sheffield University in 1989. She co-founded Cut Back Theatre co-operative with five other graduates in 1990, making and touring socially engaged work and training in physical theatre. In 1992 she moved to Newcastle, employed as a Community Theatre Worker at Theatre Station Blyth in Northumberland, and returned to Sheffield to perform with Dance Republic and Side by Side Dance Company.

In 1994 she formed **Vincent Dance Theatre**, supported by Yorkshire and Humberside Arts and Sheffield City Council. Vincent has worked for 27 years as Artistic Director/CEO of Vincent Dance Theatre (VDT) leading the organisation and directing/choreographing all the company's productions to date. Her work has been widely distributed across the UK, Europe, Canada and the USA on stage, and more recently on film and online.

Vincent also collaborated with Professor Liz Aggiss as [V&A Artefacts](#) and with Dr Claire MacDonald to curate [The Table](#).

Vincent is committed to raising the profile of female-led arts practice in the UK, working in collaboration with [Parents and Carers in Performing Arts](#) to advocate for accessibility for parents returning to work in the cultural sector. She is regularly asked to chair and facilitate dialogue and debate around gender and her own [feminist practice](#), campaigning for gender equality through all the company's work, both on and off the stage.

In 2012 Vincent initiated and curated the inaugural [Juncture Festival](#), a four-week festival of experimental, female led performance and practice at Yorkshire Dance, Leeds. VDT's live and film productions are some of the first UK dance theatre work to be hosted on **Digital Theatre +**, along with an interview with Vincent and Dr Anna Furse (Goldsmiths University) and accompanying contextualising resources.

Vincent is a 'Dream Artist' at Pavilion Dance South West. VDT is Associate Company at Brighton Dome and is regularly funded by Arts Council England as a National Portfolio Organisation. Vincent was on the Artists Advisory Group at Yorkshire Dance and Steering Group for Dance UK's National Choreographic Conference in May 2013. Vincent completed a Clore Leadership Short Course (2010), the Clore Programme for CEO/Artistic Directors (2011) and Clore Brave Conversations Programme in 2013.

There is a chapter discussing VDT's work in [*The Twenty-First Century Performance Reader*](#) (2019) and a chapter by Josephine Leask in a forthcoming (2020) Routledge book ***50 Contemporary Choreographers***. VDT was twice nominated in 2018 for Best Independent Company and for Antonia Grove's performance in the critically acclaimed work **Virgin Territory**.

In 2019 Vincent gained a certificate as a Youth Mental Health First Aider (from Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) England), attended Brighton & Hove Virtual School for Children in Care, joined Care conferences on *Trauma Informed Approaches in Schools and Attachment Aware Behaviour Regulation Policies* (Keynote: Dr. Margot Sutherland) and a workshop with Dan Hughes on *Awakening curiosity, comfort, and joy: Daily care and therapeutic interventions for the mistrustful child* (clinical psychologist who founded and developed Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy (DDP), a treatment for children who have experienced abuse and neglect and demonstrate ongoing problems related to attachment and trauma). In 2020 Vincent intends to study for a PhD by Publication, reflecting on a lifetime of making original dance theatre work.

Information on all VDT Productions can be found here: <http://www.vincentdt.com/productions/>

VDT'S works to date are:

Intercourse 1994
Noli Me Tangere 1994
Chthonian Pleasures 1996
In Optimo City, The Almost Perfect Town 1997
Glasshouse, film, 1999
Falling From The High Rise of Love 1999
On The House 2000/2003
Caravan Of Lies 2000
Drop Dead Gorgeous (with Dada Von Bzdolow, PL) 2001
Let The Mountains Lead You To Love 2003
Punch Drunk 2004
Broken Chords 2005
Shifting Intimacies (with Keith Armstrong / Guy Webster, AUS); installation, 2005
Fairy Tale 2006
Test Run 2006
Look At Me Now Mummy 2008/2015
Double Vision (with Professor Liz Aggiss, UK) 2009
If We Go On 2009
Traces Of Her 2012 (with Dr / Revd. Claire MacDonald, UK)
Motherland 2012/2014
Underworld (originally made with Phoenix Dance Theatre 2012/ VDT retour 2015)
Virgin Territory 2016
Virgin Territory Film Installation 2017
Shut Down 2017/19
Shut Down Film Installation 2018
Art of Attachment (funded by Wellcome Trust) 2018
In Loco Parentis 2020



Vincent's first duet **Intercourse**, created with Harry Theaker, a dance graduate from Northern School of Contemporary Dance in Leeds, powered through the brutality and deep internal upheaval implicit in sexual possession. Fiercely physical partnering, together with quiet, reflective solo work and pornographic slide projections, Intercourse seized upon the fragile human quest for intimacy and kindness against a backdrop of male ownership, power and deviancy.

'Sheer female strength, challenging the concept of male classical dance, powerful work at the vanguard of physical theatre' **Sheffield Telegraph**

This duet garnered much praise, so, funded by a grant from ACE and a commission from long term partner [Yorkshire Dance](#), Vincent and Theaker created a second duet **Noli Me Tangere**, directed by Vincent and choreographer Gregory Nash.

'Punishing, at times savage choreography...fast, agile, compulsive. Remarkable in its' intensity, dizzying leaps and crashing falls...strong, intelligently conceived...brave self-exploration...' **Yorkshire Post**

These early duets toured the UK and kick-started a career long reputation for making fearless new physical theatre that questioned the conventions of dance and gender politics. Following Harry's departure to train as a Buddhist Monk in Scotland, Charlotte grew the company's work in partnership with Leeds Metropolitan University Studio Theatre (now Leeds Beckett University), commissioned by Yorkshire Dance, making larger works with more complex sets and a growing number of performers on stage. From 1999 to 2003 VDT productions were designed by Richard Lowdon, a founding member of [Forced Entertainment](#).

'An extraordinary work from the outset. Charlotte Vincent's multi-tasking vision is fresh and engaging, the dialogue tightly effective, and the dance element elastically watchable' **Independent on Sunday, Let the Mountains Lead You to Love**

Powerhouse female performer [TC Howard](#) worked with VDT from 1997 – 2007, becoming VDT's first Associate Artist from 2003-2007. TC co-directed [Fairy Tale](#), VDT's only children's show to date.



VDT Fairy Tale, Sheffield 2006

During the early years leading the company, Vincent taught and choreographed in the UK, Europe and Asia, making new work with Senza Tempo in Barcelona, Xida in Linz, Cloud Gate 2 and Crossover Dance in Taipei amongst others. In 2000 whilst directing/mentoring at the Baltic University of Dance in Gdansk, Vincent met striking visual artist/performer [Aurora Lubos](#) and multi-skilled performer/musician [Patrycja Kujańska](#). These meetings were to shift the company's work and aesthetic forever. Aurora joined the company from 2000-2015, bringing an alternative, ethereal and emotional presence to the work. Patrycja joined from 2001-2015, bringing humour, passion and real live musical talent into the mix as a skilled and highly proficient violinist.

Whilst teaching and choreographing at Linz Conservatoire in 2002, Vincent met young Polish dancer [Janusz Orlik](#), who has since performed with VDT bringing huge technical skill and maverick movement devising skill into the mix. Aurora, Patrycja and Janusz worked on all VDT's seminal larger productions: [Punch Drunk](#) (2004), [Broken Chords](#) (2005), [If We Go On](#) (2009), [Motherland](#) (2012) and [Underworld](#) (2015) and on key smaller ones: [Test Run](#) (2006) and [Look at Me Now, Mummy](#) (2008). These three multi-talented Polish collaborators have influenced the direction of the company and its work for a decade and a half and their commitment and contribution to the company's growth remains unparalleled in the company's history.

Vincent met Composer/Cellist/Performer **Alex Catona** at an artist exchange at [O Espaço do Tempo](#) in Portugal in 2004 and Alex composed VDT's work from 2005- 2012. Since then Charlotte has regularly collaborated with Composer [Jules Maxwell](#), Lighting Designer **Nigel Edwards**, Film Maker/Editor **Bosie Vincent**, Performer/Rehearsal Director [Azzura Ardovani](#) and performers [Robert Clark](#) and [Antonia Grove](#). Information on all VDT **Collaborators** can be found here: <http://www.vincentdt.com/about-us/the-company>

'Meticulously detailed, working across generations, it's more than dance. Charlotte is shouting in the spaces that matter.' **Judith Mackrell, Guardian Dance Critic**



Motherland performed live at Peak Performances, NJ, USA, 2014

To hear Vincent's **REFLECTIONS** on the making process and themes of each VDT production go here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=14tFGZ0Na3Y&list=PLZwZDyS_uOXr-j7DamnSGCVzrbpsdM1I-

Alongside making new work Charlotte has facilitated dance/performance workshops and residencies in community contexts as diverse as galleries, football stadiums, swimming pools, prisons and youth centres, as well as in dance agencies and art centres in the UK, Europe, America and Asia. Information about **VDT SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT WORK** can be found here: <http://www.vincentdt.com/engagement/>

Charlotte and her VDT collaborators also teach at GCSE, B-Tec, A-Level, BA and MA level in schools, colleges, PRU's, conservatoires, colleges and universities: <http://www.vincentdt.com/teaching-and-learning/>



VDT SHUT DOWN, performed live in London, 2017

Following a 21 Year retrospective in 2015, Vincent created [Virgin Territory](#) (2016) pioneering a new approach to creating and distributing VDT's interdisciplinary, intergenerational work **on stage, on film and online**, the research approach for which was less 'auto-biographical' and more socially engaged.

The full-length work was **captured live** and **placed online**, to be viewed on personal devices and subscription platform Digital Theatre +. The choreographic material, text and creative content from the 1hour 30 minute live production was then reimagined and shot on location by Film Maker **Bosie Vincent** to create a **60 minute film installation** to be viewed communally in gallery or theatre spaces across multiple screens and finally distributed as a **full length split screen production online** (75 mins; viewed remotely). Individual **short films (scenes)** from *both* full-length live capture and split screen productions are also screened alongside workshops or presentations in community, formal education, dialogue and debate settings.

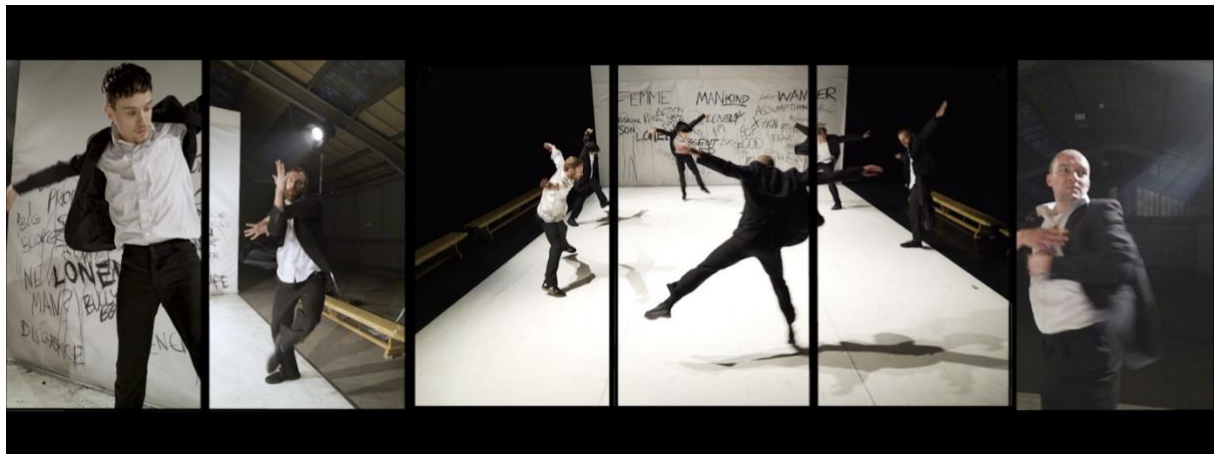
This process has been repeated in 2018/19 for VDT's brother work [SHUT DOWN](#) and forms the company's creative and distribution methodology going forward.

VDT now offers programmers a varied repertoire– live stage works, film installations, community/teaching based residencies focused around the film installations and more recently (in response to the Covid 19 pandemic/lockdown) **online screenings** of live captures shared through [VDT's You tube channel](#).

Producing *multiple live, film based and online outcomes* extends the life of each production well beyond a conventional live tour. VDT's work is now programmed in art galleries, community settings, academic, welfare and social contexts as well as online platforms including [Digital Theatre +](#).

Vincent explains **Virgin Territory** Film Installation here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=13&v=dxzwwgZG17A



VDT **SHUT DOWN** Film Installation, Brighton Festival, 2018

VDT produces multiple creative outcomes from each new production made. This approach:

- Captures Vincent's body of work and builds a crafted, digitised legacy online
- Accommodates the changing way in which people now 'consume' art (through personal devices, online, at home as well as in theatre and dance venues)
- Contests cultural norms and narratives within the UK conventional dance touring circuit, instead gathering, representing and embedding young, vulnerable and minority voices across all VDT activity
- Ensures those people who take part in our participation programmes and research processes also become audiences for the work (outside of theatre contexts)
- Accommodates the practical working conditions needed for mature collaborators who have young children (less live touring with all its associated disruptions to home life)
- Enables VDT's Artistic Director's to experiment with challenging themes, non-professional performers and compositional form in order to expand notions of what socially engaged, professional 'dance' can be

Vincent's fearless intellect, designer's eye and distinct choreographic voice results in a body of work unique in form, content and aesthetic. Often placing the female experience centre stage, Vincent collaborates across gender, generation, racial and social class to create socially engaged, enquiry-based productions. Her pioneering work as ambassador for **Gender Equality** informs all VDT's artistic and organisational activity, on and off the stage, with the artist's lifelong commitment to women's and children's rights resulting in **social awareness campaigns** such as [#VDTEveryday Action](#).

In 2018, Artistic Director Charlotte Vincent and Poet Lemn Sissay were commissioned by Brighton's [Oasis Project](#) to produce new works in collaboration with women and children affected by substance misuse. Vincent produced a one off live performance **Art of Attachment**, working over 9 months with substance misusing women and their children. **Art of Attachment** makes explicit the devastating impact of physical, sexual and emotional abuse on women's lives and explores the complex bond between substance misusing mothers and their children. The work celebrates the everyday hope, resilience and resolve of women and children overcoming adversity, whose stories demand to be seen and heard. Combining the women's testimonies, provocative visual imagery and deeply moving performances by four women in recovery working alongside VDT collaborators Robert Clark and Antonia Grove, Vincent's [Art of Attachment](#) is '*agonisingly visceral, and often beyond words... a piece about love as an enduring source of hope.*' *The Psychologist*.



VDT's *Art of Attachment*, 2018

[In Loco Parentis \(2020\)](#) continues Vincent's challenging, socially engaged approach to making new work by shedding light on the extraordinary resilience of care-experienced young people, their parents and carers demanding their stories be heard on the universal human need to be safe, to feel looked after and to belong.

'What In Loco Parentis conveys, with its arduous carousel of disordered and disrupted interactions, is the visceral emotional labour involved in surviving – and creating – home.'

The Psychologist

Critically acclaimed for translating real-life testimonies into beautifully crafted performance work, VDT's socially engaged, collaborative practice places *gender politics*, *female experience* and *trauma narratives* at its core. VDT's work is unusual in that it maintains sophisticated artistic merit whilst employing the *values* of participation practice and exploring the complex tensions between inclusivity and choreographic practice, text and movement, recorded 'real life' testimony and theatrical direct address, the personal and the political, the live and filmed. VDT's methodology results in a clearly recognisable aesthetic that 'gives voice' and public status to marginalised groups, shedding light on the social barriers faced by vulnerable people whilst redefining notions of 'inclusivity' in the dance context and rewriting what dance 'should' look like, whose lives it represents and who high quality performance work is for.

The development of VDT's increasingly 'trauma informed' approach to participation practice and the building of new audiences for dance to include social care/mental health/child development professionals and service users earned VDT a rare 'Outstanding Diversity' status from ACE in 2019/20.



VDT's In Loco Parentis, 2020

www.vincentdt.com

@VincentDT / vincentdancetheatreuk / @vincentdance