



**Michelle Potter  
(Canberra)**

*michellepotter.org; The  
Canberra Times*

**Highlight of the year**

The visit to Australia by the Royal Ballet. The repertoire was outstanding and the dancers an absolute thrill to watch.

**Most significant dance event**

The BOLD Festival held in Canberra and organised by Liz Lea. Lea received no funding for this initiative and yet managed to present, over three days, an exceptionally varied program of lectures, demonstrations, films and performances. Participants and audience members represented a wide range of dance genres and came from across the country for this exceptional venture.

**Most interesting Australian independent group or artist**

Australian Dance Artists, the Sydney-based group of senior dancers, especially for the work they produce in conjunction with sculptor Ken Unsworth.

**Most interesting Australian group or artist**

Bangarra Dance Theatre for the way the company continues to present such a powerful, honest and illuminating Indigenous perspective on post 1788 Australian history.

**Most outstanding choreography**

Tim Harbour's *Squander and Glory* for the Australian Ballet. The work was an

exceptional collaborative venture and Harbour's choreography had an intricacy and intimacy combined with a sound structure that made it a standout in his output to date.

**Best new work**

Wayne McGregor's *Woolf Works* as performed by the Royal Ballet in Brisbane in 2017. It was a brilliant distillation of the essential themes of three novels by Virginia Woolf and demonstrated how exciting ballet can be in the hands of exceptional minds and remarkable dancers.

**Most outstanding dancer**

Beau Dean Riley Smith of Bangarra Dance Theatre who gave a dramatic and incredibly moving portrayal of the Indigenous man Bennelong in Bangarra's work of the same name.

**Dancer to watch**

Lucy Green, recently promoted to principal artist with Queensland Ballet.

**Boos!**

I was hugely disappointed with the presentation ceremony for 2017 Australian Dance Awards. Those artists who were short-listed had spent their year producing outstanding work and yet those who produced and hosted the event, and those who presented the awards, seemed to forget that the short-listed artists and the eventual winners were the focus of the event. There was far too much promotion of matters not relevant to the awards, there were technical issues that got in the way of excellence in presentation, and where was the film footage that the short-listed nominees were asked to provide for use in the ceremony? I can only hope for a better production in 2018.

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