

JILL SYKES, AM

Jill Sykes has been writing about the arts, dance in particular, since 1960 when she began working as a cadet journalist in Adelaide with *The Advertiser*. She has been freelancing since 1979 and is respected as a dance writer and critic for the breadth of her outlook, which encompasses all forms of dance; for the honesty of her approach; and for the inspiration her reviews and articles generate for her readers.

Growing up in Adelaide, Sykes saw her first dance performance when not quite six years old when the British company, Ballet Rambert, brought its production of *Giselle* to Adelaide. Her love of dance, and the arts in general, began then. Sykes travelled to London in 1965 and joined the reporting staff of *The Evening News*, eventually becoming one of that newspaper's dance critics. Back in Australia, she was employed by *The Sydney Morning Herald* as a news reporter in 1972 and soon became its dance critic as well. Sykes left *The Herald's* fulltime staff in 1979.

Since 1979 she has written a wealth of dance reviews and articles, which have appeared in newspapers, including regularly in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, and in a wide range of other newspapers, dance magazines, and journals in Australia and overseas. She is the author of *The Sydney Opera House: from the outside in* and has contributed to the Currency Press *Companion to Theatre in Australia* and, most recently, Routledge's *Shaping the Landscape: Celebrating Dance in Australia*, published in 2012 and updated in 2020.

Sykes also writes about theatre, music and the visual arts and in 1995 was honoured with an AM for her service to the arts. In 1997 she was the recipient of an Australian Dance Award for Services to Dance.