



AIATSIS
Australian Institute of Aboriginal
and Torres Strait Islander Studies

INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITY

Worldwide knowledge and understanding of Australian Indigenous cultures, past and present

Wednesday 13 May 2009

‘Renaming the Land’ - The Voss Journey Begins **12.30pm Thursday 14 May 2009**

THE VOSS JOURNEY, a four-day festival of events, begins tomorrow, Thursday 14 May, with a dynamic performance of Ludwig Leichhardt’s expeditions from the perspective of the First Australians.

Ludwig Leichhardt, explorer and naturalist, arrived in Australia in 1842 with plans to cross the continent and his ill-fated journey became the basis for Patrick White’s novel VOSS and its central character Johann Ulrich Voss. THE VOSS JOURNEY will begin with an evocative performance, ‘Dr Ludwig Leichhardt - Renaming the Land’, choreographed by the renowned Graeme Watson and performed by developing artists from NAISDA Dance College at 12.30pm Thursday 14 May, at the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS), Lawson Crescent on the Acton Peninsula.

This special dance presentation, supported by music and narration, will represent some of Leichhardt’s observations and encounters with the First Australians. THE VOSS JOURNEY is part of the Canberra International Music Festival, led by the National Film and Sound Archive and with the participation of more than 12 institutions including AIATSIS. All events are inspired by Patrick White’s iconic novel, ‘Voss’ (1956) and explore the fictional journeys of Johann Ulrich Voss and his historical counterpart Ludwig Leichhardt.

AIATSIS is Australia’s leading centre for quality, community-based research about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and lifestyles – past and present. It plays a unique role as the keeping place of the world’s largest collection of materials relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples including films, stills, recordings and printed materials. Through its work, AIATSIS raises awareness among all Australians of the richness and diversity of the world’s oldest continuing cultures and histories.

NAISDA Dance College is Australia’s national tertiary college for Indigenous dance, training Indigenous dancers for more than 30 years for careers in the performing arts. At NAISDA, both traditional and contemporary Indigenous dance are taught, but traditional Indigenous culture is always at the heart of the NAISDA learning experience.

AIATSIS will then host the first Voss seminar, ‘Ludwig Leichhardt: His Life, Explorations and Legacy’ at 2.00pm on Thursday 14 May in the Mabo Room, AIATSIS. This free seminar will be presented by Emeritus Prof. Rod Home, with assistance from the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany.

INTERVIEW OR PHOTO OPPORTUNITY: For more information, to arrange an interview with Mr Kim Walker, Chief Executive Officer of NAISDA Dance College, or to schedule photographs of the developing artists, please contact AIATSIS Public Affairs on (02) 6261 4254 or 0419 978 035.