

# mad monk

## Artists Biographies

### 1. TONY YAP - *Dance/Theatre*

Tony Yap, born in Malaysia, is an accomplished dancer, director, choreographer and visual artist. Tony was one of the principle performers with **IRAA Theatre** (1989-1996). He has made a commitment to the exploration and creation of an individual dance theatre language that is informed by psycho-physical research, Asian shamanistic trance dance, Butoh and psycho-vocal experimentations. Tony has received numerous nominations and awards including *The Decay of the Angel* which won him a **Green Room Award for Male Dancer Award**; and *Rasa Sayang* was nominated for The **Australian Dance Awards for Outstanding Achievement** in Independent Dance. He has been a leading figure in inter-cultural discourse and received **Asialink residential** grants to work in Indonesia in 2005, and 2008 and a **Dance fellowship** from the Australia Council for the Arts. Tony is the founding **Creative Director of Melaka Arts and Performance Festival** – MAP Fest ([www.melakafestival.com](http://www.melakafestival.com)).

He has contributed significantly to the development of contemporary dance & performance practice, particularly bringing a non-Western perspective to the palette of work being created. His practice is grounded in: Asian philosophies, sensibilities and forms; inter-cultural and multi-disciplinary approaches; ongoing relationships and collaborations that deepen over time; inclusiveness, diversity and individuality; process, evolution and the emergent.

Tony was one of the principle performers with **IRAA Theatre** (1989-1996) and has worked extensively in Australia and overseas including *Agamemnon*, **Festival Colline Torinese**, Italy, and *The Trojan Woman*, **Vienna International Art Festival**. As the founding Artistic director of **Mixed Company** (now Tony Yap Company) in 1993. Tony has collaborated with many companies and individual in Australia, Indonesia, Austria, Italy, France, Malaysia, Greece, The Netherlands, Denmark, China, South Korea and Japan. He danced in an international collaborative work in *The Silence of the Forest* with **Company Lian in Paris** and *The Night Gardener* in Marseille for the **Mai-diteranee Festival**, France.

*“...exquisite...There are real lessons to be learned from the way Yap builds his work. Each element has its place and is given its time, allowing the audience to reflect and absorb the multiplicity of meanings....The feeling was profound, the silence palpable.”* – *St Sebastian* - The Age

#### Collection of works:

Aus stage: <https://www.ausstage.edu.au/pages/contributor/9447>

## 2. CY GORMAN - *Digital Media*

Cy Gorman's creative practice focuses on the design and development of site-specific audiovisual resonance environments. Modalities of applied skills include systems analysis, interaction design, multimedia installation, live or pre-produced video environments, creative lighting environments, projection mapping, sound design, and dance-film making. As an interdisciplinary arts collaborator he has worked with Chunky Move, Stephanie Lake, and Tony Yap, and his work as a maker/director has featured on separate occasions in France and Bangladesh at the **World Dance Alliance Global Summit**.

As the founder of the tech-wellbeing startup, Nurobodi, Cy's work bridges technology, design, and holistic health using a combination of embodied practices and tech-based harmonic 'fine-tuning' methodologies to entrain the mind-body towards transformative heightened or altered states. Cy is also signed to the boutique Melbourne music label Heard and Felt and with organic release support from BBC (UK), KCRW (USA) for his recent album '*Hiwave*' his music has been described, among other things, as "***Thundercat discovering Buddhism and Artificial Intelligence at the same time***"

Cy's work as an academic and researcher includes the design, development and application of AI-ethics interaction, aesthetic vs anti-aesthetic experiences with a focus on multisensory perception within digital or interactive environments and transformative colour-resonance environments. His research is realized through theory, creative practice and real-world problem-solving through design. He is a researcher, course designer, and lecturer at RMIT Melbourne for the Bachelor of Digital Media Design in the creative applications of blockchain, immersive audiovisual techniques, and 360 audiovisual design for XR.

### **Cy's projects can be found on the following sites:**

Creative Projects: [www.cygormanvisual.com](http://www.cygormanvisual.com)

Dance Film: [www.augorg.com](http://www.augorg.com)

Tech-Health Startup: [www.nurobodi.com](http://www.nurobodi.com)

Music Label: [www.heardandfelt.com](http://www.heardandfelt.com)

### 3. REUBEN LEWIS - *Musician/Sonic Art*

Reuben's practice is both singular and eclectic. As an award-winning composer, improviser, bandleader and producer he has refined a diverse electro-acoustic language, devised through trumpet with extended techniques and preparations alongside live analogue processing with pedals and samplers, that is as much at home in a nightclub as it is on a hilltop in Malaysia surrounded by dancers and bull-trance shamans. As a solo artist, his work has been described as **"a vivid listening experience that gleams with sinister detail"** (The Wire) and **"beyond category"** (The Australian), whilst his ensemble I Hold the Lion's Paw has been described as **"a beguiling stew of afro-beat, jazz-rock-inflected postbop, and electro-acoustic noise"** (The Wire) and reflecting the **"feeling of having stumbled into someone else's LSD trip"** (Sydney Morning Herald).

The first studio album with his ensemble **I Hold the Lion's Paw (IHTLP)**, titled *Abstract Playgrounds*, was released through Earshift Music (AU) and gained international acclaim – including a glowing review in 'The Wire' magazine and a nomination for the Best Australian Jazz Ensemble at the Bell Awards. His second album *Lost in Place*, was nominated for a 2022 APRA/AMC **Art Music Award** for **Best Jazz Album** and launched at the **Melbourne International Jazz Festival**. His debut solo record, titled *The House is Empty*, was released in 2022 on the esteemed ambient label Shimmering Moods (NL).

In 2017, he performed an 8-hour durational sleep concert with **The Phonetic Orchestra** at the **Serralves Festival** in Portugal. Reuben also co-produced and performed in their 24-hour concert *Silent Towns*, which was streamed live from Germany and Australia in 2020 and subsequently won the **APRA AMCOS/AMC Art Music Award** for jazz/improvised music performance of the year in 2021.

As a music producer, Reuben has developed a character that is as distinctive as his live performance practice. Alongside his production work for multiple projects with I Hold the Lion's Paw, Tony Yap Company, The Phonetic Orchestra and I Hold the Great Rack, he has produced and co-recorded many releases including the recent release *Closed Beginnings* featuring Tariro Mavondo on AAO Recordings.

As an arts professional, Reuben works part time at a number of key organisations in the Australian arts sector. His current roles include Marketing & Communications Manger at Dancehouse as well as Publicity & Content Producer at Earshift Music. Previous roles include Digital Producer & AAO Recordings Manager at Australian Art Orchestra (2020-2022).