

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE1065

Watson, Roslyn

(1954 -)

Nationality Australian

Born 1 January, 1954, Brisbane Queensland Australia

Occupation Choreographer, Dancer

Summary

Roslyn Watson is an Aboriginal Australian ballet dancer and choreographer of international renown. Born in Brisbane of Biri descent, she has danced in a number of Australian companies since beginning her career in the early 1970s. She has danced internationally, and with international companies, including the prestigious Dance Theatre of Harlem.

Details

Roslyn Watson was born in 1954 in Brisbane, of Biri descent. She commenced classical ballet training at the age of twelve in Brisbane. In 1969, she was awarded an Abstudy grant and entered the Australian Ballet School, Melbourne, where she studied under Kathleen Gorham. After graduating in 1972, she joined the Dance Theatre of New South Wales (later the Sydney Dance Company) and, having moved to New York, the following year she danced with the prestigious, all-black Dance Theatre of Harlem.

Returning to Brisbane in 1975, Roslyn danced with the Queensland Ballet for three years before joining the Australian Dance Theatre (ADT) in Adelaide. She subsequently toured Southeast Asia and Europe with the ADT, and performed with the company at the Edinburgh Festival in 1980. Leaving the ADT in late 1981, she took up a tutoring position at the Aboriginal Islander Dance Theatre in Sydney. She went to Paris in 1982, and after mastering the language, she formed her own dance group, Company Brolga, which performed *Images of Our Dreaming*, which Roslyn herself had choreographed.

She returned to Brisbane in 1987 and has appeared in a variety of shows and has worked as a choreographer. In 1991, she established the Murri Dance Theatre in Brisbane, and in 1993 she worked on the production of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ballet, titled *Green Butterfly*.

Published resources

Edited Book

The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia : Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, society and culture, Horton, David, 1994

Book

Murawina : Australian women of high achievement, Roberta Sykes ; photography by Sandy Edwards, 1993

Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Author Details

Leonarda Kovacic and Nikki Henningham

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