

# Member Profile



## Zsuzsi Soboslay

I'd like to say I started dancing when I was two, but that is far from true. I was a rather watchful child, musical, but my family's sphere of influence was old-school middle-European: girl-children essentially should be demure and still. But I guess I took in too much of the world to stay still for long. I loved words and drew all the time, too, and played classical piano, which teaches you a lot about structure.

I did a few plays in upper high school, but at university explored performance more and more. As an actor, I discovered I could tumble and move in ways I had no idea I could achieve. There was a gap between 'me' and 'this me'-the performer, which made me curious. My self-concept had been self-limiting. I began to find movement -patterns, rhythms, motion--in everything, in words, in space, between performers. I was handed all the warm-up sessions: I seemed to intuit the right physical sequences which would clear blockages, what breath and/or image would help someone become ready to transform. And I needed to understand how I knew.

I studied ideokinesis, some BMC, butoh [including a period of time studying in Japan]. And then Qi Gong, which develops a direct sensory awareness of the interior of the body-the organs, spaciousness, the relations between. I developed an environmental dance practice. I am sure some landscapes-the Wollongong coast, in particular--taught me how to hear what was speaking, how to listen. Responsibility became a central concern.



*Dead Fish Dance*

There is of course an ethical dimension to this: if we only hear half of what is resounding, speaking in our environment, we are probably underestimating what it is and what we are too [and not giving credit where it is due].

I love helping people find the freedom to move and engage in reciprocity. It's actually distressing watching actors, for example, unaware of what they leave out of the equation. We are watching denial. When I teach now, it is sometimes with non-dancers, just people who are interested in discovering who, how, and what they are in the world. The point of realization is what matters: in these general classes it doesn't even matter whether a gesture is enlarged or remains at the starting-point, minimal, provided the clarity is there. This last point has been helpful working with people of mixed abilities, but also in overcoming some very serious injuries of my own.



In the last three years, I have been working a lot with musicians, getting them to understand their own bodies as the first instrument, then also space: before they strike a note, there is already music within and all around them. Why limit the material there to help you improvise? I have been developing work with Sydney's Synergy Percussion and others now for over 3 years. Last year, Synergy won the ABC Limelight award for Best Concert for a major work in which I was very proud to be involved.

I am currently performing in *Under Milk Wood*, by poet Dylan Thomas, at the Street Theatre. It involves voice [singing and text] and some movement. I love it; it uses every part of me. Because you embody your training you never really leave yourself behind as you move in and out of different practices. I have a small 'pop up' at the NGA in March, to accompany the Toulouse-Lautrec exhibition Community Day, working live with a piano accordionist. Toulouse-Lautrec's favourite dancer, Jane Avril, actually had a 'movement disorder' which I am researching. I am looking forward to developing and performing this role. My long-term, major work is *Anthems and Angels*, a multi-artform performance looking at what survives immigration in the landscape of the body-in terms of memory, culture, sound. The body can show what words can't always tell.

Zsuzsi teaches BodyEcology, Re-Cog-Motion, and Landscape Jazz and works as a consultant and performer in theatre and music events in Canberra, Sydney, Wollongong and Melbourne.

Performance archive: [www.zsuzsiperformanceblog.blogspot.com.au/](http://www.zsuzsiperformanceblog.blogspot.com.au/)

Dance ecology work: [www.bodyecology.com.au/ppArchive.html](http://www.bodyecology.com.au/ppArchive.html)

Other workshops: [www.bodyecology.com.au/workshopRepertoire.html](http://www.bodyecology.com.au/workshopRepertoire.html)