



EMILY BUTTLE - DIRECTOR PROFILE

International performance artist specialising in stilt dance, shows & spectacular design.



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Originally from Christchurch, NZ, Emily Buttle spent ten years based in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, founding and establishing EMPRESS Stiltedance. Emily is the founder, director, designer and also performed full time in all the acts.

Since starting out solo in 1996, Emily has developed EMPRESS into a company of highly skilled female stilt performers presenting spectacular walk acts (ie mobile acts) at a wide range of events in Europe and internationally.

These unique large-scale characters have performed at hundreds of events and appeared in magazines, websites and newspapers all over the world. Whilst on the northern European circuit EMPRESS created a distinctive style of colourful, feminine walk acts with particular skills in improvisational dance and exciting balance work. Colourful, graceful and visually gorgeous the EMPRESS stilt characters have a popular, family friendly appeal.

EMPRESS performances have ranged from these deceptively simple walk acts, through club dancing, television appearances, choreographed opening acts, commissioned works and onto full-scale theatre collaborations.

Over the last fourteen years EMPRESS has employed more than thirty performers and now spans three countries. The Netherlands branch, now managed by Jelleke Jorritsma, has become one of Holland's most loved stilt companies.

In 2003 Emily introduced EMPRESS to the UK and started to reach an even wider audience, and in 2006 Emily set up a new branch in Melbourne, Australia, led by Jodie Foreman.

Based, since 2005, in Wellington, New Zealand, Emily now creates work for national and international events whilst feeding her growing company with new designs and costume acts. Emily also trains her stilt performers, develops, directs and produces new EMPRESS shows.

Collaborating with other Wellington based artist producers and performers has also brought to EMPRESS a new capacity for aerial work, directing and choreographic growth.

Emily has also started to create installation and performance design work which has launched EMPRESS as a highly capable art production company with a unique and feminine aesthetic.

All together EMPRESS now offers large-scale design and performance products to a number of key events in NZ and internationally, whilst still presenting the popular stilt walk acts to local events in all three countries.

Background

In 1992 Emily gained a Bachelor of Fine Arts at Canterbury University majoring in Sculpture and Theatre. She then spent four years in Dunedin experimenting with a wide range of mediums before forming a theatre company with Juliet Sorrel and touring NZ, 1995 & 1996. Their show "GLASS" was voted 'Best of the Fringe' at Bats in 1996 and involved stilts costumes and physical theatre.

Emily then travelled and performed solo in Europe for a year before being invited to perform with the Stef Arntz – one of the top street theatre agencies in Amsterdam. EMPRESS Stiltedance is still a leading act in The Netherlands and is already a popular choice with a number of NZ and Australian events.