

## MOTIONHOUSE TOURS ELECTRIFYING NEW PRODUCTION, CHARGE DURING COMPANY'S 30<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY YEAR

### THE MULTI-MEDIA DANCE THEATRE WORK TRACES THE STORY OF ELECTRICITY IN OUR LIVES



Images © Dan Tucker

Following its premiere in autumn 2017 and sell-out shows across the UK and in Italy, **Motionhouse** presents **Charge**, the company's latest electrifying dance-circus production. In **Charge**, art and science collide: Dance-circus, film and music take audiences on a journey deep into the human body, tracing the extraordinary story of electricity in our lives.

From the electrical charge that sparks human life, to the beating of our hearts and the memories we make, six exceptional dancers bring **Charge** to life with athletic dance, awe-inspiring acrobatics and daring feats on the 5m-high set.

2018 marks 30 incredible years since Executive Director Louise Richards and Artistic Director Kevin Finnan, MBE founded the company in 1988. In three decades the company has presented more than 40 productions across the world, last year alone more than nearly 80,000 people saw the company perform or took part in one of its dynamic learning and participatory activities that continue to inspire the next generation of dancers and audiences.

Finnan worked with Professor Frances Ashcroft and her team at the University of Oxford to delve deeper into the science that influenced **Charge**. Ashcroft published 'The Spark of Life' about electricity in the human body and is recognised for her outstanding contributions to the public's awareness of science.

Finnan's **Charge** also explores the historical understanding of the role of electricity in the body, using Galvani's experimentation with frogs to the popular interest in electricity that resulted in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, this year celebrating its 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

The third element of Finnan's 'Earth Trilogy', **Charge** builds on relevant environmental themes explored in *Scattered* (2009) and *Broken* (2013).

**Finnan said:** *"Charge takes my interest in contemporary themes about the world we live in one step further. Scattered tackled our relationship with water and Broken delved into our links with the Earth. For Charge I was inspired by a specific area of scientific research - our relationship with energy and the role electricity plays in the human body. We're looking forward to bringing the third part of this trilogy to our audiences as part of our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations."*

Motionhouse has become the 'go to' company to create visionary large-scale events. Even beaches, stately homes, harbours and inner city wastelands have received the Motionhouse artistic and creative treatment.

Finnan, also known for his choreography and movement direction of the London 2012 Paralympic Games' Opening Ceremony, worked closely with the dancers and creative team to bring his vision of **Charge** to life.

The imposing set is created by long-standing collaborator Simon Dormon who has designed and built sets for the majority of Motionhouse productions. Original music is by Tim Dickinson and Sophy Smith with sound design by Tim Dickinson and Logela Multimedia. Lighting design is by award-winning Natasha Chivers.

Through innovative education resources to accompany the production, the aim is to interest young people in the science behind **Charge**, using dance as an entry point to spark their interest.

Motionhouse is supported using public funding by the National Lottery through Arts Council England. **Charge** is supported by Warwick Arts Centre, The Rothschild Foundation, the Ernest Cook Trust and TippingPoint Stories of Change. Official Energy Partner of Charge is First Utility.

**-ENDS-**

**For media enquiries please contact:** Jane Bailey on 01926 887052/07854872566 | [Jane@motionhouse.co.uk](mailto:Jane@motionhouse.co.uk)

#### **Notes:**

**Charge is created and directed by:** Kevin Finnan, MBE

**Motionhouse performers:** Martina Bussi, Daniel Massarella, Junior Cunningham (Rehearsal Director), Chris Knight, Luka Owen, Alasdair Stewart, Naomi Tadevossian and Rebecca Williams

**Set design by:** Simon Dormon with construction by Oblique

**Lighting design by:** Natasha Chivers

**Digital imagery:** Imanol Garaizabal and Karlos Gomez, Logela Multimedia

**Music by:** Tim Dickinson and Sophy Smith

**Sound design by:** Tim Dickinson and Logela Multimedia

**Production management:** Austin Lawler at CUE

**Images:** Chris Nash and Dan Tucker (more photos available upon request)

**About our science partners:** Our science partners, Professor Frances Ashcroft and her team, will provide scientific content to support the artistic creation process and will also contribute to the development of the supporting education resources, ensuring the science is rigorous and accurately reflected.

**Professor Frances Ashcroft DBE, FRS, FMedSci:** Professor Dame Frances Ashcroft is Professor of Physiology at the University of Physiology and a Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford. Her research focuses on how elevation of the blood glucose level causes insulin secretion from the pancreatic beta-cell and what goes wrong with this process in diabetes. She has a major interest in ion channels, tiny pores found in all cells of the body that are responsible for the electrical activity of nerve and muscle fibres, and the cells that release insulin. Mutations in ion channels cause many human diseases including epilepsy, cardiac arrhythmias, cystic fibrosis and rare genetic forms of diabetes. Recognised for her outstanding contributions to the public awareness of science, Ashcroft has also published the widely acclaimed book, 'The Spark of Life,' about electricity in the human body.

**About Motionhouse - Pushing movement to its limits since 1988:** Founded in 1988 by Louise Richards and Kevin Finnan MBE, we create world class dance-circus productions that tour extensively to rave reviews across the globe. From full-length productions for theatre touring to flexible work for the outdoors and large-scale performance events, our sell-out productions integrate athletic physicality, powerful narrative, incredible digital imagery and emotive sound scores. Our work takes its inspiration from common human concerns and our connection to the world in which we live, with recent works exploring flooding, the pressure of time, fear and captivity, and our relationship with water, the Earth and energy. Our dancers perform on stunning sets, alongside JCB diggers, with aerialists and singers, in incredible settings and to breath-taking effect.

**Theatre productions:** Our full-length productions tour to theatres across the UK and internationally. We seamlessly integrate digital imagery with live performance, creating a 'living film' that draws audiences into the magical world on stage. Powerful and emotive, these productions inspire and move; generating repeat tours, large audiences and reinforcing our reputation as an outstanding touring company. Recent years have seen two highly acclaimed US tours, as well as tours of mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau, Japan, and regular appearances throughout Europe.

**Outdoor productions:** Pioneers of outdoor dance, our range of flexible productions tours to festivals and non-theatre spaces. These short, sharp injections of dance and circus are designed to be performed outdoors and up-close rather than in a conventional theatre. Immensely popular on the international festival circuit, we tour this work extensively, inspiring audiences who are not necessarily familiar with dance. These works are also increasingly popular for corporate and other events. We are currently touring a series of outdoor productions that range in scale and duration from an intimate 9-minute duet to a 45-minute dance-circus collaboration with NoFit State Circus on giant Jenga blocks, and a series of larger-scale spectacles incorporating dancers and JCB diggers.

**Large-scale events:** With a three-decade track record of creating work in unusual settings, we have secured a reputation as the 'go to' company to create visionary large-scale outdoor events. From beaches to stately homes and from animating a working harbour to bringing an inner city wasteland to life, as well as being commissioned to celebrate the London 2012 Olympic Games from bid success through launch to opening, we are renowned for our spectacular large-scale outdoor events. Our Artistic Director Kevin Finnan MBE was Choreographer and Movement Director for the Opening Ceremony of the London 2012 Paralympic Games.

**Inspiring the next generation:** We deliver a wide range of learning and training projects, in schools and in the community, for students and for young professionals, focusing on skills-development and creativity. Our teaching is accessible and inspiring and emphasises a sense of achievement for all. We offer a range of activities for all ages and abilities and frequently offer the opportunity to develop creative work for performance.

Motionhouse is supported using public funding by the National Lottery through Arts Council England.

Website: [www.motionhouse.co.uk](http://www.motionhouse.co.uk) | Twitter: [@MotionhouseDT](https://twitter.com/MotionhouseDT) | Facebook: [www.facebook.com/Motionhouse](https://www.facebook.com/Motionhouse)

Motionhouse is supported by:



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**



**VITSOE**

**John Ellerman  
Foundation**

Charge was created with support from:



**THE ROTHSCHILD FOUNDATION**



**TippingPoint**  
Energising the creative response  
to climate change

**STORIES  
of CHANGE**  
The past, present & future of energy



Official energy partner of Charge:

**First Utility**