**Introducing IRMA and the performers/dancers**

Hello and welcome to this audio introduction for IRMA, brought to us by Manchester-based artists DAMAEDANCE who have choreographed and who perform the piece.

My name is Anne Hornsby and I’m the audio describer for IRMA, for Mind’s Eye. This introduction will take around six minutes to listen to, and the dance piece lasts around 25 minutes.

*(To be voiced by Alice – word the intro as you wish!)*

Hi I’m Alice Bonazzi….(roles in Damae Dance)

Description: originally from Bologna,

28, slim but strong build, dark hair cut in boyish style, large brown eyes,

*(To be voiced by Sara - word the intro as you wish!))*

Hi I’m Sara Marques

….(roles in Damae Dance)

Description: originally from Porto

26, petite but strong, long, glossy, dark brown hair, worn up, large brown eyes,

*(Anne)*

Both characters wear informal, plain, functional clothes made of solid fabric. The colour palette is earthy colours, different shades of pink, brown and khaki green. The costume design conveys an idea of grounded and raw femininity, far from the light weight and ethereal image of women, which is predominantly shown on stage.

*(Do we mention any alternate dancers?)*

In the description Alice will be referred to as Dancer One and Sara as Dancer Two.

Dancer One struggles with her duality. She is considered ‘a rock’ by the people around her, but internally she has a fear of disappointing and not meeting expectations. The armour she has created is difficult to crack. At the same time she feels a deep need of connection, of showing her soft and vulnerable side. She can have a short temper, but never gives up on the people around her.

Dancer Two also struggles with her duality. She is a worrier, who suffers from anxiety. She fears isolation and separation from others. She is a person that follows, and tries to be supportive, but also deeply cares about the people she loves

About IRMA

IRMA is Portugese/Spanish for *Sister,* and the piece explores the relationship between two women, two friends, although it has been interpreted as being about any relationship between two people.

During IRMA, we explore different moods and moments within the journey of the relationship, communicated through their own movements, but especially in the way they touch and interact with and react to each other.

At the beginning, movements are tentative, explorative, inquisitive, leading on to the testing and development of the relationship. In the second section, the two women go through a phase of anger and misunderstanding. Their movement is fast-paced, very much pull-and push, with a lot of attack - physically exhausting to perform.

There are moments of closeness, of harmony, of complementarity, juxtaposed with moments of annoyance, anger, frustration, and a desire to get away from the other person.

The third and final part marks the moment when they eventually find a common ground, a new tenderness, a new understanding of each other. Their bodies intertwine, softly and easily connect to each other. There is a consolidation of the relationship, a resolution of conflict, an acceptance and a moving forwards.

**IRMA outside**

IRMA is performed outdoors sometimes on a circular dance floor and sometimes it is more rectangular or square. The audience are seated on all sides allowing them to appreciate the skills and athleticism of the dancers, from all angles.

The style of movement is bold, honest, physical, powerful. Both young women are supple, agile and strong and both perform movements which are traditionally associated with male dancers. These include lifting the partner to the hip, supporting her weight, or scooping her up and carrying her. Acrobatic movements such as handstands and cartwheels feature amongst more lyrical or rhythmical moments. Above all though, the movement is about expression, communicating to us the closeness of the relationship, or the distance, physical and emotional between the women, their support of and for each other, but also their need and desire to be alone.

IRMA is performed under an open sky, without props or scenery, enabling the audience to focus on the movements and facial expressions of the dancers. Nothing comes in the way of the intimacy between performers and audience.

The audio description is pre-recorded, so listen out for the cue to start it, so that it can be synchronised with the live performance unfolding before you.

The original score for IRMA is by Jeph Vanger