

Katie Green: Biography

After reading English at Cambridge, I graduated from London Contemporary Dance School in 2006 and formed my contemporary dance company Made By Katie Green in the same year. Made By Katie Green is now multi-award winning (St Hugh's Foundation Award 2009, Bonnie Bird New Choreography Award 2007, Pyramid Award for Contemporary Dance 2006), and my work with the company has been described as "meaningful, moving", "compelling", "tender and beautiful" (Sanjoy Roy, Amy Johnson, Kate Larsen). In October 2010 I was selected as one of the first cohort of UK Young Artists to present my choreographic work at the inaugural UKYA01 event.

As well as directing Made By Katie Green, I work as a freelance performer, choreographer and teacher in London, the East Midlands and the East region (UK). Since January 2011 I have also been working as a performer with Cie. Willi Dorner (Austria).

When I commenced my planning for my St Hugh's Foundation Fellowship in 2009, I had four main aims:

1. To research and create a new contemporary dance piece
2. To undertake professional development by working with a Choreographic Mentor and attending at least one national/international choreographic lab in the year of my Fellowship
3. To explore opportunities for at least six groups of local young people to participate in my choreographic process in a meaningful way through creative dance workshops
4. To develop the structure and reputation of my company Made By Katie Green

Between October 2009 and July 2011 I achieved these aims in the following ways:

1. Research and creation of a new contemporary dance piece

My most recent work, *Matters of Life and Death*, re-imagines a key scene from Graham Swift's novel *Waterland*, in which a body is found floating in a Fenland sluice. Four individuals urgently begin to retrieve the body from the water, and are forced to come to terms with the event that shatters their quiet lives (www.madebykatiegreen.co.uk/current.htm).

I adopted a three-phase approach to developing this piece with the support of the St Hugh's Foundation:

Phase 1: In January and February 2010 I worked with a group of 12 dancers to research ideas for *Matters of Life and Death* over four days of workshops. I commissioned Lincoln-based company Electric Egg to document these four days of research, and the resulting three minute film can be accessed at www.madebykatiegreen.co.uk/researchfeb2010.htm.



Photo: Nuno Santos, *Matters of Life and Death*

Phase 2: My second phase of research for the new piece took place between July and August 2010, and also received project funding from the National Lottery through Arts Council England. Following five intensive weeks of rehearsal, I created a 22 minute version of *Matters of Life and Death* in collaboration with five dancers. On culmination of my Phase 2 research, *Matters of Life and Death* was selected to be performed at the inaugural UKYA01 event, profiling the work of exceptional young artists based in the UK.

Phase 3: Building on my Phase 2 rehearsals and two additional days of production research with theatre designer James Perkins and lighting designer Gareth Green (carried out in March 2011) I was successful in applying for Phase 3 project funding from the National Lottery through Arts Council England. I went on to develop *Matters of Life and Death* to create an hour long work between August and October 2011. I premiered the work on the 20th October 2011 at the Terry O'Toole Theatre in North Hykeham, and continue to tour the work to venues in the East Midlands and London/Greater London (www.madebykatiegreen.co.uk/current.htm).

2. To undertake professional development by working with a Choreographic Mentor and attending at least one national/international choreographic lab in the year of my Fellowship

During my St Hugh's Foundation Fellowship I have worked with experienced Choreographic Mentors Anna Williams and Kate Flatt (www.kateflatt.com). I have also invited a range of guest practitioners to contribute to my research for *Matters of Life and Death*, including the members of my creative team detailed at www.madebykatiegreen.co.uk/current.htm, theatre director Tom Cornford (www.tomcornford.com) and Contact Improvisation practitioner Jovair Longo. Additionally, I have participated in a range of choreographic development opportunities, including a three day Contact Improvisation intensive at the Summer Dancing Festival with Charlie Morrissey, Adrian Russi and Jacky Miredin (Coventry, June 2010), a four day intensive at The Place with dance dramaturg Peggy Olsislaegers (London, June 2011) and Choreodrome 2011, also at The Place (August 2011).

I exceeded my expectations for gaining experience of the international dance scene during my St Hugh's Foundation Fellowship. Following on from my initial planned visit to the Springdance festival in Utrecht (the Netherlands, April 2010), I was invited by Austrian choreographer Willi Dorner to join his company for performances of his new work *above, under, inbetween* in 2011. My work with Cie. Willi Dorner has taken me to Vienna (Austria) and Seoul (South Korea) to date, with planned performances in Linz, Utrecht, Chalon sur Saône, Basel, Brussels and Japan in 2012.

3. To explore opportunities for at least six groups of local young people to participate in my choreographic process in a meaningful way through creative dance workshops



Photo: Brian Pickering, InCompany workshops at Déda

Since being awarded the St Hugh's Fellowship Award in October 2009, my creative dance participation work with young people in the East Midlands has included choreography for a Disco Flash Mob for Derby Festé 2010 (www.madebykatiegreen.co.uk/derbydiscoflashmob.htm), commissions for the SO Festival in Skegness in 2010 and 2011 (www.madebykatiegreen.co.uk/SOFestival2010.htm and [/SOFestival2011.htm](http://www.madebykatiegreen.co.uk/SOFestival2011.htm)), choreography for youth dance performance companies InCompany in Derby and kNacKer'd in North Hykeham and creative dance workshops in a range of regional primary and secondary schools. I also invited two dance graduates from the University of Lincoln to work as apprentices with Made By Katie Green in August 2010, and again in August 2011. These apprenticeships were delivered in partnership with Lincolnshire Dance.

In 2011 I initiated the Made By YOU project with the support of the St Hugh's Foundation, the National Lottery through Arts Council England and the Youth Dance England partners in the East Midlands. This participation project is significant for me because it:

- evidences the developing strength of the Made By Katie Green brand and my increased project-management skills: the Made By YOU partners indicated their confidence in my ability as an individual through their collective willingness to be identified with me and with my project,

- draws together regional partners to support the unified purpose of developing choreographic provision for young dancers in the region.

Following a series of regional choreographic workshops and an open application process (for which I received 30 expressions of interest), I selected 19 year old Alexa Mason from Ashbourne in Derbyshire to create a new 10 minute curtain-raiser duet with dancers from Made By Katie Green. This duet, entitled *Oxygen*, is now touring alongside *Matters of Life and Death* (www.madebykatiegreen.co.uk/madebyyou.htm).

4. To develop the structure and reputation of my company Made By Katie Green

My St Hugh's Fellowship Award has enabled me to invest in an ongoing collaboration with established dance manager Joe Bates (Morton Bates Arts Services: www.mortonbates.com). My work with Joe enables me to maximise the potential of my expanding network of contacts and my increasing understanding of how my portfolio can continue to inspire me and also impact upon other people. My work with Joe informs me about how the dance industry works, what that can mean for me, and how I can be responsive to a constantly changing working environment in order to achieve the things I want to achieve in dance. The development work with Joe also contributes to my ongoing professional development in terms of managing larger projects and budgets.

The most significant discovery that I have made during my St Hugh's Foundation Fellowship is:

A fuller understanding of my artistry:

As a result of the choreographic research I have undertaken and the professional development opportunities in which I have participated, I have a more rigorous understanding of my particular approach to my practice, including what I consider to be my responsibilities as an artist and why, and the key features of my choreographic signature. This is beneficial in terms of the development of my organisation because it makes it easier for me to talk about and therefore market my work and the Made By Katie Green brand. Creatively, this process of understanding has enabled me to express more confidently what kinds of physical stories I want to tell, how I want to tell them, why, and to whom. It has also encouraged me to think about my rationale for the decisions I make about my portfolio as a whole and how these decisions can also feed into my choreographic signature.

I am hugely thankful to the Trustees of the St Hugh's Foundation, including my mentor, Pete Moss, for their advice and support throughout my Fellowship project. I know that their good work will continue to support artists from all disciplines working in Lincolnshire, East Yorkshire and Hull, and I look forward to engaging more with that work in the future.

Katie Green, December 2011
www.madebykatiegreen.co.uk