



theage.com.au

THE AGE

 [Print this article](#) |  [Close this window](#)

Splitting into bite size chunks

Robin Usher
October 11, 2008

GIDEON Obarzanek and his company, Chunky Move, are festival darlings. This week's premiere at the Melbourne International Arts Festival of their new work, *Two Faced Bastard*, is the company's seventh festival appearance this year.

That does not include other international destinations that have reinforced the company's position as Australia's biggest contemporary dance export.

But *Two Faced Bastard*, which opened Thursday night, is different from the previous two pieces that are exciting international directors with a combination of dancers and cutting-edge technology.

"This is ungarnished low-tech, concentrating on the performers on the stage," Obarzanek says. "It's a reoccurring pattern that I come back to the rudiments of choreography in some sort of high-tech reaction."

The complexity of *Two Faced Bastard*, which Obarzanek created with his partner, Lucy Guerin, lies in its exploration of the nature of performance itself, using two actors, Brian Lipson and Vincent Crowley, and five dancers.

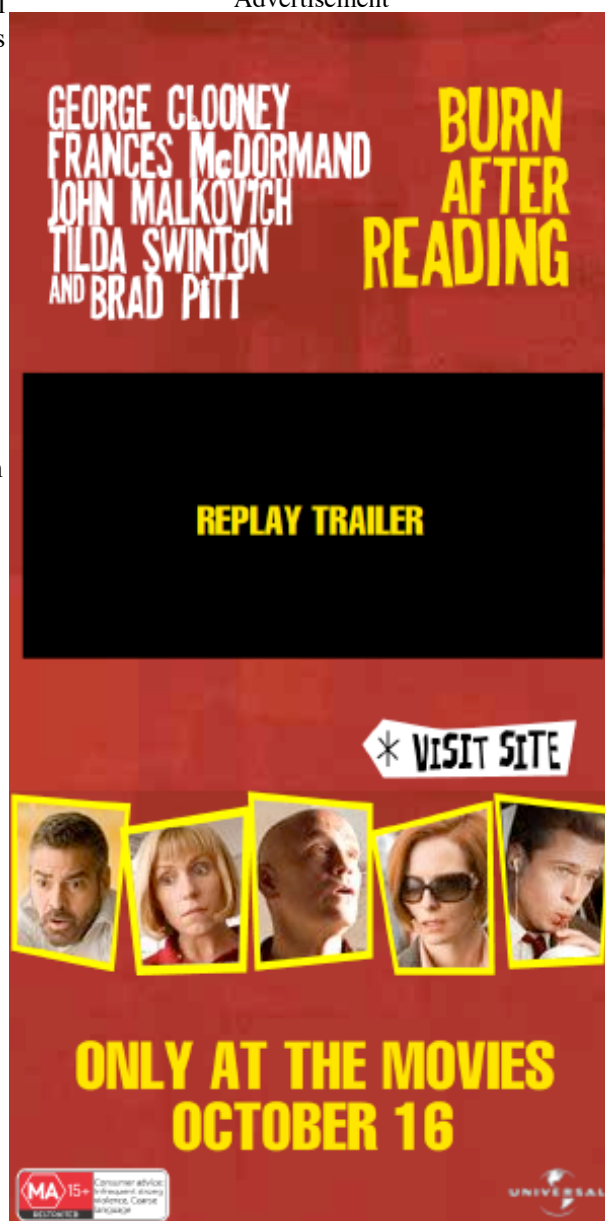
The stage is divided by a curtain, with half of the audience seated on either side. They each see a different show, but every performer's exit through the curtain becomes an entrance on the other side. "It's an argument about irreconcilable aspects of our personality that neither side can win — they have to be combined," Obarzanek says.

The two choreographers began by exploring the notion of Jekyll and Hyde using masks and disguises. But Obarzanek says they realised the role of the performers themselves could provide the content.

"Performance is a form of deception," he said. "People can see the performers switch on and switch off."

Work began on the piece about 18 months ago, just as international demand for Obarzanek's earlier creation, *Glow*, intensified.

Advertisement



GEORGE CLOONEY
FRANCES McDORMAND
JOHN MALKOVICH
TILDA SWINTON
AND BRAD PITT

**BURN
AFTER
READING**

REPLAY TRAILER

*** VISIT SITE**

**ONLY AT THE MOVIES
OCTOBER 16**

MA-15
Consumer advice
Required. Strong
language, some
violence

UNIVERSAL

Glow is a solo work, incorporating video and laser technology, which was part of the Melbourne Festival last year, this year's Adelaide Festival and will tour overseas in 2009.

But before completing *Two Faced Bastard*, Obarzanek was invited by the Sydney Festival to create a bigger work as a follow-up work to *Glow*, again using technology.

The result was *Mortal Engine* which premiered last January and was invited to this year's Edinburgh Festival, the first time an Australian dance work has been performed there in more than a decade. The company then took the work to a festival in Holland, while *Glow* went on to Lisbon. *Mortal Engine* will be seen in Melbourne at the Malthouse next March and discussions are under way for it to travel to Mexico, Spain and New York next year.

Obarzanek created Chunky Move in Sydney in 1995 and moved to Melbourne three years later, where it became a vital component in the growing success of contemporary dance in the city.

This story was found at: <http://www.theage.com.au/articles/2008/10/10/1223145634466.html>