

Press Release, 9<sup>th</sup> April

## LIVE PROGRAMME LEWIS WALKER *BORNSICK*

Serpentine partners with EAF25 (Edinburgh Art Festival) to premiere a new performance by choreographer and dancer Lewis Walker

At Round Chapel, 1D Glenarm Rd, Lower Clapton, London E5 0LY  
21st and 22nd May 2025

Press preview: Wednesday 21 May 2025, 7pm

Limited tickets, please register your interest [press@serpentinegalleries.org](mailto:press@serpentinegalleries.org)



Images: Lewis Walker, *Bornsick*, 2025. Co-commissioned by Serpentine and EAF (Edinburgh Art Festival). Poster photography by: YISKID. Courtesy the artist, Serpentine and EAF. Lewis Walker, *Bornsick*, 2025, trailer, still. Film by Leah Walker. Courtesy the artists, Serpentine and EAF.

Serpentine is delighted to present the world premiere of *Bornsick*, a new performance by choreographer and dancer Lewis Walker. It will be staged at the Round Chapel, in London on 21st and 22nd May.

Co-commissioned by Serpentine and EAF (Edinburgh Art Festival), the performance will examine the human condition and travel to First Stage Studios in Edinburgh on 23 August 2025 at EAF25.



Lewis Walker (they/them) is a London-born queer, non-binary movement artist. Their work spans theatre, film, fashion, music, and the commercial sector. In *Bornsick* they explore themes of humanhood, performativity through queerness and referencing.

**Lewis Walker said:** “*Bornsick* reflects the idea that we inherit illness—born into a system that shapes us before we can define ourselves. The gymnastics and dance performance explores identity as a compulsive act of referencing, an endless cycle of borrowing and reshaping of what came before.

*Bornsick* suggests that humanhood is a paradox; we search for something real, yet everything we are is borrowed. We long for authenticity, but if reality is only an echo of what came before, then individuality itself is an illusion; the self exists purely as a reflection.”

From the moment we enter the world, we inherit history; gestures, roles, expectations. We are taught movement, speech, and existence. The queer body, in particular, exists in a tension between conformity and freedom constructing and reconstructing itself through cultural echoes. In a world built on repetition, in *Bornsick*, identity becomes an act of shapeshifting, a constant negotiation between imposed structures and self-determined transformation never fixed but always in flux.

This idea comes to life in the performance as a body is built, piece by piece—a character assembled through learned movements, imposed behaviors, and artificial layers. Yet as these layers are stripped away, what remains is not a pure, original self, but another reference, another construct. Through conditioning, we create a machine. Through unlearning, we return to the animal. The cycle continues, revealing that there is no final, fixed truth—only endless adaptation.

Previous performances from Serpentine’s live programme have included: Lenio Kaklea presented at Sadler’s Wells (2024), Silas Renier (2016), Mette Ingvartsen (2015), Bouchra Ouizguen (2017) and Shawanda Corbett (2019); in Park Nights, Simone Forti in *The Shape of a Circle in the Mind of a Fish* (2018); Serafine1369 in *Equilibrium: A Public Gathering on Environmental Justice* (2022); bones tan jones’ *Parasites of Pangu* (2019) commissioned for Saturdays Live; Adham Faramawy in *Queer Earth and Liquid Matters* (2022); MJ Harper as part of Grace Wales Bonner’s *A Time for New Dreams* (2019); and *Movement* (2014) curated by Marina Abromović with Wayne McGregor for Serpentine Cinema.

The project is curated and produced by:

Serpentine: Kostas Stasinopoulos, Curator, Live Programmes, Serpentine, Daisy Gould, Assistant Curator, Live Programmes, Isobel Peyton Jones, Producer, Serpentine and Andy Downie, Production Manager, Velocet.



EAF: Kim McAleese, Director and Eleanor Edmondson, Curator, EAF (Edinburgh Art Festival).

Credits:

Choreographer: Lewis Walker

Performance: Lewis Walker

Music from: Oliver Coates, “Throb, shiver, arrow of time” and “skins n slime”

Look Engineer: Straytukay

Lighting Designer: Laurie Loads

Lighting Programmer & Co-designer: Edward James Saunders

Graphic Designer: Marco Andrea Cacioni

Set Designer: David White

Hypnotherapist: Michele Occelli

Poster photographer: YISKID

Physiotherapist & acupuncturist: Atsue Morinaga

## Notes to Editors

A former Great Britain gymnast and Acrobatic Gymnastics World Champion, **Lewis Walker** (b.1996, London) trained from age 6 to 21 before earning a degree in Contemporary Dance. Their work spans theatre, film, fashion, music, and the commercial sector. Walker continues to choreograph gymnastics competition routines for the Great Britain, Italian and French national teams. Their creative vision and dynamic movement style have led to collaborations with Tim Walker, Yorgos Lanthimos, ANOHNI, Tirzah, BULLYACHE, Burberry, UNTITLAB, and the Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA).

Beyond performance, Walker is dedicated to teaching movement as a tool for accessing deeper states of consciousness and developing a deeper understanding of consensual touch. Their Connecting to Improv workshop explores dance improvisation as a ritual of shared energy and expression, while MOVE HYPNO, a collaboration with hypnotherapist Michele Occelli, blends movement and hypnotherapy for personal transformation.

Walker is currently a Studio Wayne McGregor RESIDENT 6 artist-in-residence.

## About Serpentine

Building new connections between artists and audiences, Serpentine presents pioneering contemporary art exhibitions and cultural events with a legacy that stretches back over half a century, from a wide range of emerging practitioners to the most internationally recognised artists, writers, scientists, thinkers, and cultural thought leaders of our time.

Based in London’s Kensington Gardens, across two sites, Serpentine North and Serpentine South, Serpentine features a year-round, free programme of exhibitions, architectural



showcases, education, live events, and technological activations, in the park and beyond the gallery walls.

The Serpentine Pavilion is a yearly pioneering commission, which began in 2000 with Dame Zaha Hadid. It features the first UK structures by some of the biggest names in international architecture.

Public art has emerged as a central strand of Serpentine's programme. Major presentations include a collection of Eduardo Paolozzi's sculptures (1987), Anish Kapoor's *Turning the World Upside Down* (2010), Lee Ufan's *Relatum – Stage* (2018-19), Christo and Jeanne-Claude's *London Mastaba* in the Serpentine Lake (2018), *I LOVE YOU EARTH* by Yoko Ono (2021), Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster's *In remembrance of the coming alien (Alienor)* (2022), Atta Kwami's *Dzidzɔ kple amenuveve* (Joy and Grace) (2021-22), Gerhard Richter's *STRIP-TOWER* (2023), Yayoi Kusama's *Pumpkin* (2024) and Esther Mahlangu's mural *Umntu ngumuntu ngabantu* (2024).

Proud to maintain free access for all visitors, Serpentine reaches an exceptionally broad audience and maintains a profound connection with its local community.




**EAF (Edinburgh Art Festival)** is the UK's largest annual festival of visual art. Founded in 2004, we cultivate connections between artists, collaborators and communities to develop and platform contemporary visual art projects in Edinburgh. In August, we present an ambitious Festival programme of exhibitions, events and projects with our 35+ Partner Galleries, both deeply rooted in the city and globally connected. Our work is grounded in social justice, championing the voices and work of intersectional, emerging, and early career artists and collectives to develop art projects that address colonial histories, queerness, feminism and the climate crisis.

**For more information, please contact:**

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**Bornsick is commissioned by Serpentine and EAF 25**

**EAF25**

