



ROSIE KAY DANCE COMPANY

# 5 SOLDIERS

THE BODY IS THE FRONTLINE

## TOUR INFORMATION PACK

65 minutes, in three sections / No Interval  
Contemporary Dance Theatre  
Suitable for all audiences above 12 years



## ABOUT THE WORK

**A thrilling and humane portrait of army life telling the stories of five men and women serving on the front line.**

In 2008, choreographer Rosie Kay joined the 4th Battalion The Rifles, to watch and participate in full battle exercises, and visited the Defence and National Rehabilitation Centre for our Armed Forces. What came of these observations is this award-winning, five-star work.

Deeply realistic, stark and thrilling, 5 SOLDIERS offers no moral stance on war, but instead questions what it is that we ask of our soldiers and explores how the human body remains essential to war, even in the 21st century, with Kay's trademark intense physical and athletic dance theatre.

*"Lust, shock and awe... 5 SOLDIERS is a disturbing, illuminating and necessary glimpse into a world we mostly prefer to ignore"* The Guardian, Top 10 Dance of 2015

*"War from a female perspective packs a punch... taut, visceral, compassionate"* The Observer

The work changes perceptions of the soldier in the mind of the general public, allowing soldiers to be seen as humans and individuals, showing the sheer effort and physical work involved, and touching people with a deep understanding and portrayal of the life of a soldier.

5 SOLDIERS originally premiered in 2010 and was revived in 2015. The show has been presented in association The British Army in 2016 and 2017 who value the work for its honest reflection of the issues facing modern armies.

In 2017 5 SOLDIERS was commissioned by The Space (BBC/Arts Council England) for a live stream and on demand video capture.

- Winner Summerhall Jawbone Award for Greatest Edinburgh Festival Moments 2017
- Nominated for BEST CHOREOGRAPHY (MODERN) at the 2015 National Dance Awards
- Best Dance and Top 10 Dance in 2015 in The Guardian and The Observer; Best Dance and Top 5 Dance in 2015 in The Independent
- Best Dance Production 2015 from North East Theatre Guide
- Awarded an Arts and Health Special Commendation by the Royal Society for Public Health for the company's excellent contribution to arts and health practice.

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## TOURING FORMATS

### Traditional Theatre

9x9m stage space x 5m high. End on/proscenium arch or thrust. Can also be built and performed on a large stage with the house curtain in and seating banks built on stage on three sides.

### Military Facility/Drill Hall/Sports Hall

Working in partnership with local military and arts venue/presenter. Presenting in a military facility gives an additional depth to the show experience and an extra draw for audiences to access an unusual non-public location.

We can build a theatre in any large space (ideally 25x20m or larger) with a truss rig containing all lighting, sound and projection equipment.

### Post-show talkbacks

Following the show audiences want to know more and ask questions. Panels usually include Rosie Kay, the dancers, local military representatives and arts venue programmers.

### Outdoor preview

A 15 minute preview performance presented in a busy location as a promotional and media opportunity. Can be with or without amplified music.

### Engagement workshops

We can offer dance sessions for ages 12+. From a single session to a multi-week engagement project where we recruit and train a local dance artist to create a curtain-raiser to be presented before the full show.

## 5 SOLDIERS VIDEO FOOTAGE

- Theatre show trailer: <https://vimeo.com/219393061>
- Outdoor show trailer: <https://vimeo.com/134477527>
- The Making of 5 SOLDIERS (2015 tour including engagement activity): <https://vimeo.com/134292856>
- Rosie Kay's inspiration for 5 SOLDIERS: <https://vimeo.com/225425199>

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## FURTHER DETAILS

Length:	65 minutes no interval
Choreographer/ Director:	Rosie Kay
Producer:	James Preston
Designer:	Louis Price
Dramaturg:	Ben Payne
Lighting Designer	Mike Gunning
Visual Artist:	David Cotterrell
Commissioned original score:	Annie Mahtani
Samples from:	The Clash ( <i>Jean Jeanie</i> ) <i>Firework</i> by Katy Perry Pergolesi's <i>Stabat Mater</i>
5 dancers:	4 male 1 female
Touring:	10 on the road
Costumes:	British Army uniform MTP fatigues
Props:	8 car-sized tyres Army rucksacks
Style:	Contemporary dance theatre, with narrative structure

Originally commissioned by International Dance Festival Birmingham ([idfb.co.uk](http://idfb.co.uk)) and supported by Warwick Arts Centre ([warwickartscentre.co.uk](http://warwickartscentre.co.uk)) and DanceXchange ([dancexchange.org.uk](http://dancexchange.org.uk))

FUNDED BY:



Supported using public funding by  
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ENGLAND**

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## PRESS AND MILITARY AUDIENCE MEMBER QUOTES

“Rosie Kay’s five soldiers are dancers, but in-depth background researches have grounded her moves and their delivery in the physicality, camaraderie and mental challenges of army life.”

\*\*\*\*\* **The Herald**

“The armed combat, and devastating injury which closes the show (both brilliantly conveyed by the dancers), not only keeps us riveted, but helps close the gap of understanding between the armed forces and the general public.”

\*\*\*\*\* **The Scotsman**

“war from a female perspective packs a punch”

\*\*\*\*\* **The Observer**

“Lust, shock and awe...5 SOLDIERS is a disturbing, illuminating and necessary glimpse into a world we mostly prefer to ignore”

\*\*\*\*\* **The Guardian**

“Rosie Kay’s dancers get right inside the skins, the minds, the very souls of the five as they progress from the rigours of training to the breath-holding intensity of the frontline. It’s highly charged and it screams authenticity. The final scene leaves you shocked and sobered, with a new humility and a fresh understanding of what gallantry really means. Awesome.”

**The Stage**

“Rosie Kay’s use of dance to help create a complex and nuanced picture of conflict is one of the most innovative and compelling initiatives that I have experienced in the aftermath of Iraq and Afghanistan. It demonstrates how art can be used as a powerful tool in the healing process, how it can touch the extended family of those who have been caught in the horror of battle and how it can send a universal message about the soldier. It is an extraordinary achievement which will make a difference to many people.”

**General Sir Nick Parker, KCB, CBE**

“The story these five soldiers tell is devastating. The integrity with which they work is majestic in this shudderingly frank demonstration of what it can cost to be a soldier.”

\*\*\*\*\* **Edinburgh Guide**

“This is an important piece that serves as a reminder that no matter how we talk of war, the front line is still made up of ordinary people with hopes and dreams, just like the rest of us.”

\*\*\*\*\* **Edinburgh Festivals Magazine**

“Not a moment drags in this high-octane hour of humorous highs and gut-wrenching lows... This accessible but uncompromising piece is not to be missed.”

\*\*\*\*\* **BroadwayBaby.com**

“Stark and brilliantly uncompromising...Kay poignantly explores the physical and emotional effects of warfare, inviting us to consider not only the concept and tragedy of war, but the individuals involved....It is difficult not to be utterly drawn-in by the palpable intensity the dancers so aptly embody, particularly in the final scene...”

**Londondance.com**

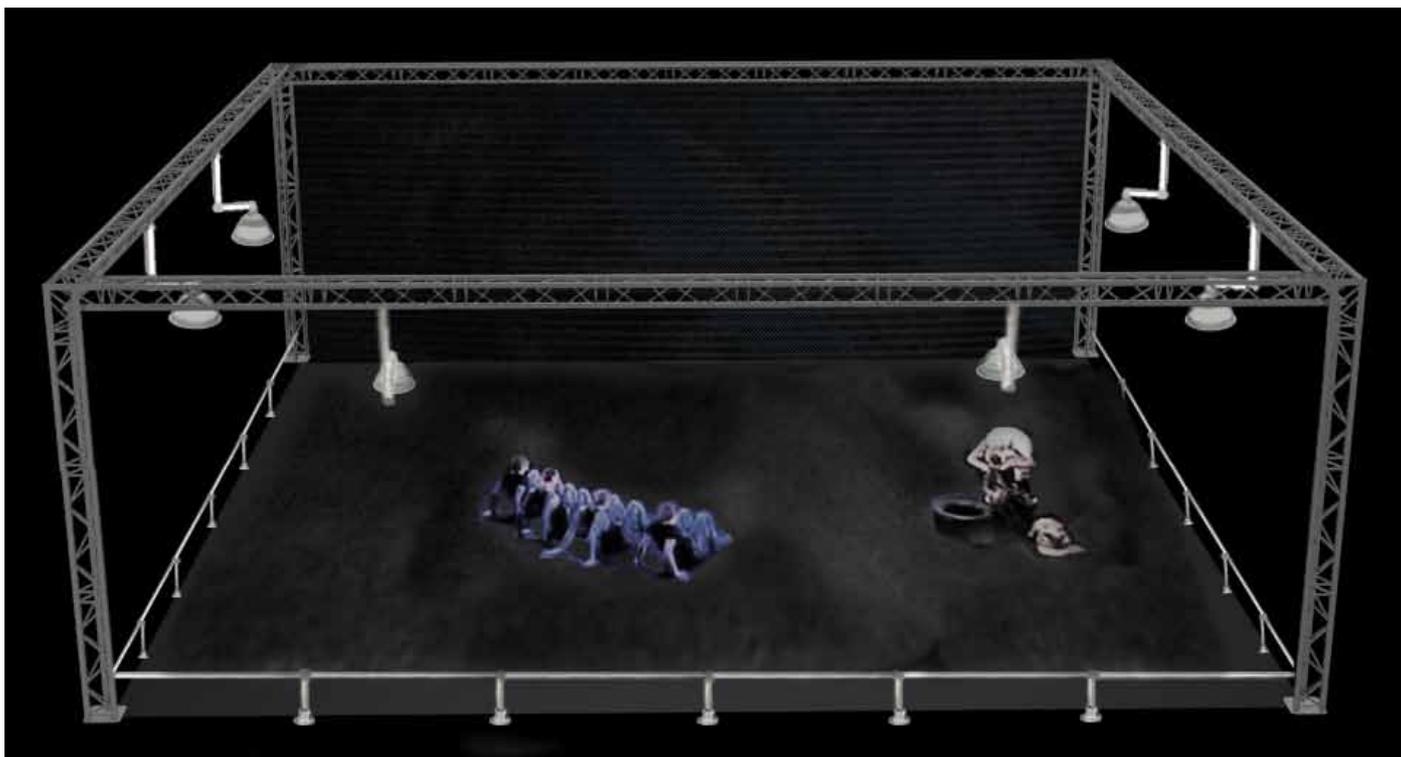
“I am a former Green Jacket soldier...I found the performance deeply moving, relevant and so representative of how soldiers are and how they cope with the contrasting aspects of their lives. Arresting and disturbing. But through it shines the inextinguishable light of the British soldier’s guts, determination and irrepressible sense of humour.”

**Audience Member**

“Many thanks for providing young people with two inspirational workshops. The sessions far exceeded their expectations; they had fun and were proud of their achievement with the stage performance. I was moved by both performances. This was a rare and unique opportunity for our young people and our community. Thank you for putting the humanity of warfare at the forefront of the performance. In my work I only know soldiers as mums and dads, so it was a brilliant insight for me.”

**Youth Worker, Army Welfare Services**

## TECHNICAL DETAILS



### Venue Specification

The venue should be blacked out to 95-100% and have a flat and level performance area. At least one dressing room should be provided, ideally with showers.

### Set & Props

The set for the show is a truss which supports all of the lighting and projection fixtures needed for the performance. The truss is square in plan with an internal dimension of 9 x 9 metres and standing on four legs, one at each corner (it can be flown to improve sightlines), to a total height of 5 metres (can be lower). The rear wall of the truss is a black canvas stretched tight and used as a projection screen. Around the edge of the dance floor a rail made of standard scaffold pieces completes the set. The floor is a 9x9m black dancefloor, if working on a hard non-sprung floor we require either a temporary wooden dancefloor or a padded floor e.g. Harlequin Allegro.

Eight standard size car tyres are used as props and the company arrives with army uniforms, backpacks and personal props.

### Projection

One projector (7k lumens +) with a wide angle lens that can be hung on the front bar and fill the 9m wide x 5m high back cloth. The second projector (4k lumens +) is overigged on the front bar and focused on the floor with a wide angle lens capable of filling as much of the 9x9m floor as possible. Both projectors are controlled via Macbooks running QLAB, we usually connect via VGA.

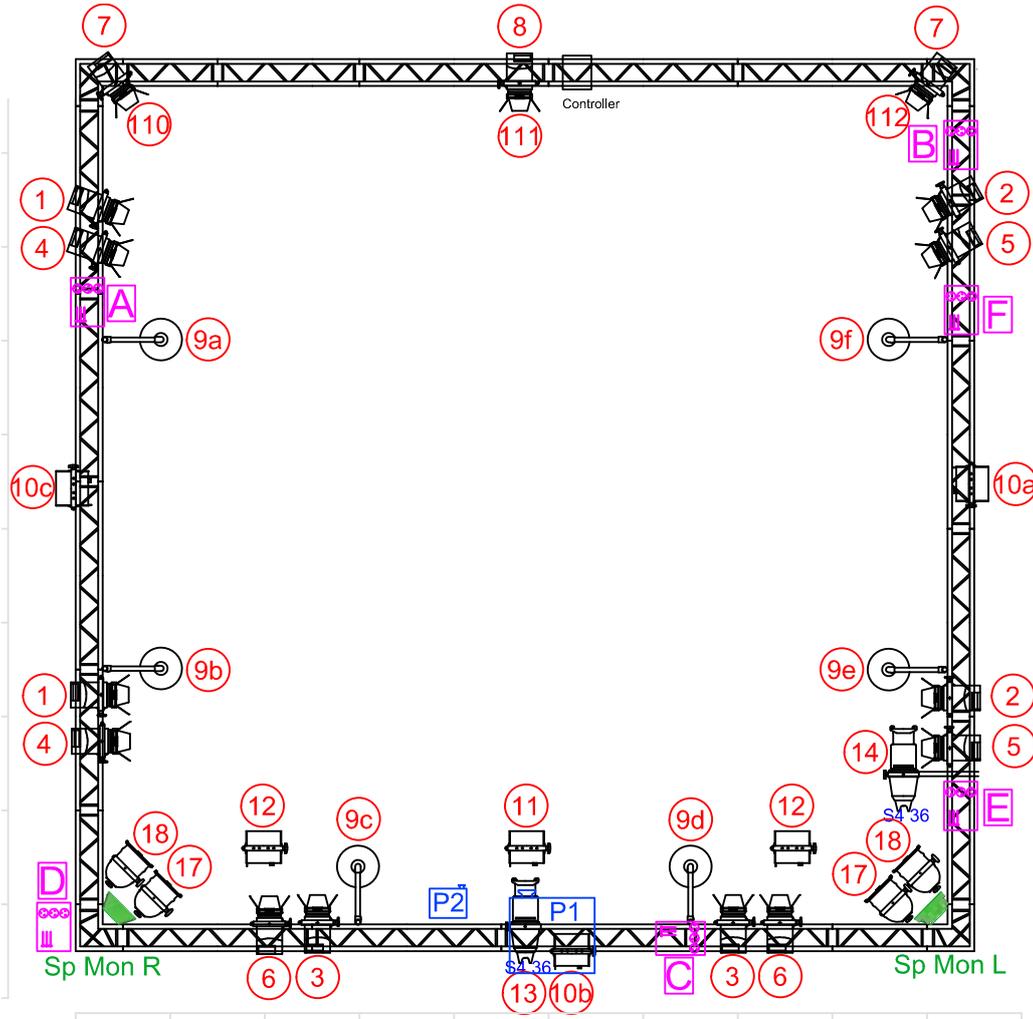
### Lighting (see plan on next page)

- 15 x Quartet Fresnel Lantern 650W with barndoors
- 3 x scrollers for Fresnels
- 2 x Source 4 36deg Lens
- 4 x Parcan
- 6 x 400w flood
- 6 x practical downlights (shown on visual above)
- 18 channels of dimming
- RKDC supplies ETC Puck control

### Sound

L & R for each seating bank (can be flown on truss) + 2 x subs + 2 x stage monitors for dancers. All fed from a Macbook via PCI DI box (provided by RKDC).

# LIGHTING PLAN



-  6 x 400 Watt Flood
-  15 x Quartet F
-  2 x Source4 36
-  4 x CP88 Parcan

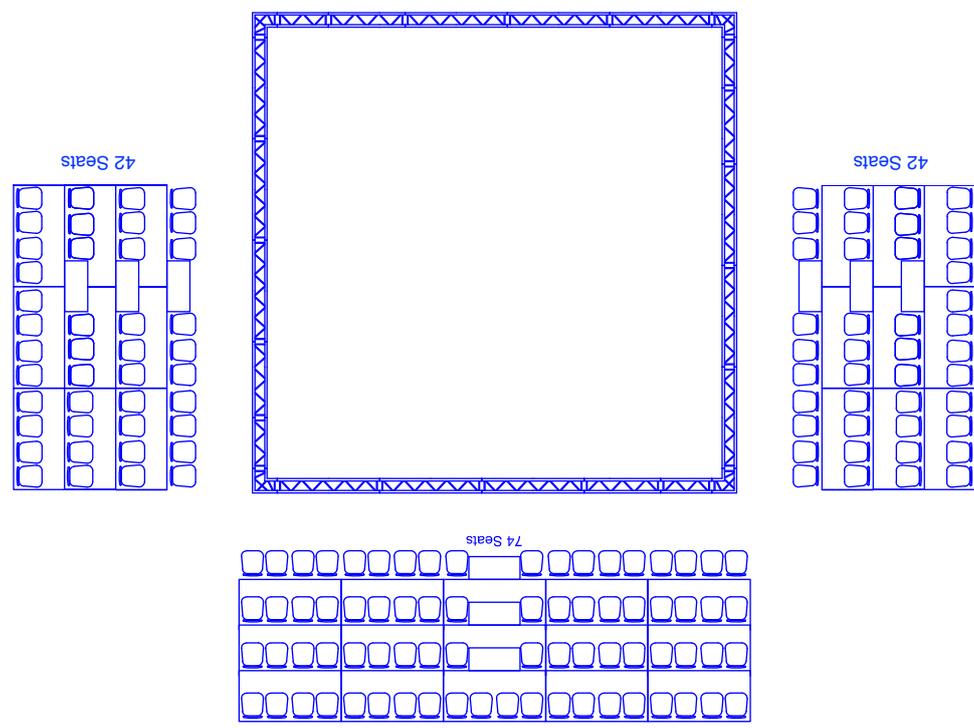
Letters A-F are Alphapack 3 channel dimmers which can be rigged on the truss - useful if running on a domestic power supply. Alternatively these can be replaced with standard dimmer racks.

P1 is 7k+ projector  
P2 is 4k+ projector

Channels 11, 12, 17 & 18 are all floor mounted lanterns.

Channel 10 are house lights.

# SEATING CONFIGURATION



- Additional rows can be added
- Aisles can be moved to outside edges
- If the truss is flown the legs can be removed and sightlines extended to allow additional seats in the corners between seating banks.

## MARKETING

At its heart 5 SOLDIERS is an hour-long professional show that engages and thrills audiences. However, there's so much more to it than just the show. The project is a partnership between the arts and military, based in real life research in the military field that has the power to attract and develop new audiences. These audiences won't be disappointed – feedback from the 2015 tour included:

*"The performance has been on my mind since I saw it. It was thought provoking and simply AMAZING!"*

*"5 Soldiers was an extraordinary experience. I can't think of anything else I have ever seen that spoke directly to me on a physical level. I found myself both interpreting the performance mentally and literally feeling it. The combination was captivating, challenging at times and extremely moving!"*

Rosie Kay Dance Company can assist with initiating partnerships and bringing people together but venues then have the opportunity to develop and capitalise on these partnerships for their own future benefit. The project will develop new audiences for dance by attracting new audiences through the subject matter of the show or their connection to the community engagement work as a participant or family member. The show attracts and surprises even the most sceptical attendee and this opens the door for venues to continue to engage people with dance programming in the long-term.

The show has the power and subject matter to attract theatre audiences who might not usually attend dance and the existing reviews encourage this. Some audiences are attracted to the unusual venues – gaining access to military venues, usually closed to civilians, is definitely a draw. These audiences are likely to come from the area local to the venue and potentially will have an existing relationship with the theatre venue partner.

Military audiences believe that the show 'get's it' – some responses from the 2015 tour:

*"For me it was a little bit like doing six months [military tour] in one hour." Serving Commanding Officer*

*"A very moving experience. I wasn't expecting it to have that sort of effect on me. A clever and evocative representation of combat presented in a medium that I never thought it could be before." General Sir Nick Parker, former Commander of the British Land Forces*

The subject matter, military venues and partnerships mean that the work attracts military audiences who may be currently serving, ex-military, support personnel, veterans and families of those connected with the military. Attracting serving military is difficult and relies on the buy-in of the local Commanding Officer – this will be achieved through the partner's engagement event early on in the project. For many of these audiences watching dance is an entirely new experience and yet they emerge enthusiastic about it.



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## ABOUT RKDC

### **Brave new dance that thrills and moves people**

Rosie Kay Dance Company have a reputation for making bold, original and exciting works that challenge perceptions and take on innovative subjects. Highly physical, with astute performances and intense athleticism, we make works that excite audiences with a visceral experience they feel in their bodies and minds. We aim to connect with our audience and are interested in building new audiences and attracting people who may have never seen first-rate contemporary dance before.

Established in 2004 the company exists to nurture and further the creative talents of choreographer and director Rosie Kay, who is recognised as a leading choreographer in dance, film and theatre. Working in partnership with producer James Preston the award winning Rosie Kay Dance Company makes a dynamic range of shows, always exploring in exciting ways what dance can be and how dance can be presented.

## END NOTES

If you require further information about 5 SOLDIERS, images on CD or a DVD of the show, please contact:

### **Executive Director: James Preston**

Email: [james@rosiekay.co.uk](mailto:james@rosiekay.co.uk)

Phone: +44 (0) 7740 192 231

### **Artistic Director: Rosie Kay**

Email: [info@rosiekay.co.uk](mailto:info@rosiekay.co.uk)

Phone: +44 (0) 7961 434 256

### **Company Address:**

Rosie Kay Dance Company,  
56 Church Road, Northfield, Birmingham B31 2LE

