Troubled times ... Dance performance Structure and Sadness will explore the tragedy of the Westgate Bridge collapse.

Structure to their sadness

BY NICOLE PRECEL

BUCKLING bodies and contorted limbs will represent one of Hobsons Bay’s greatest tragedies when Structure and Sadness premieres at the Malthouse this month.

The contemporary dance piece, choreographed by Lucie Guerin, will explore the Westgate Bridge disaster of 1970 in which 35 men died when the span collapsed.

The work stresses the physical structure and the grief of those near it.

Ms Guerin said she did a lot of research into disintegration and bridge collapses in preparation for the production.

“I was originally going to do it in a more generally universal way, but on reading about the Westgate I decided to focus around that event,” she said.

When the bridge collapsed Ms Guerin was about nine and at school.

“I remember the Westgate bridge collapsing. I remember our teacher coming into class and being so upset about it because it was such a tragic thing that happened,” she said.

She said it doesn’t tell the story of the collapse, or details of the collapse but rather explores the physics of the bridge building and the emotional repercussions of the incident.

“We worked in the studio a lot with ideas of tension, torsion, compression, shearing and buckling and how we could apply those physical influences on the human body,” she said.

The work first premiered at the 2006 Melbourne International Arts Festival, has won the Helpmann award, toured Frankfurt, Ludwigshafen and Dublin.

The production will run from 25 – 29 November at the Merlyn Theatre, The CUB Malthouse.

For more information visit www.malthousetheatre.com.au or call 9685 5111.
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