



Tap Dogs story

Tap Dogs are currently taking the world by storm with their unprecedented tap show that combines the strength and power of workmen with the precision and talent of tap dancing.

The show started with six guys from a steel town north of Sydney, Australia. Olivier Award winning choreographer Dein Perry headed the team with designer/director Nigel Triffitt, and composer Andrew Wilkie and created TAP DOGS, a 75-minute reinvention of tap.

Australian DEIN PERRY, creator and choreographer of TAP DOGS, has come a long way from the garage behind his dance teacher's house in Newcastle, a steel town north of Sydney, where, as young boys, he and the "Dogs" learned how to tap. At the age of seventeen, with no opportunities in sight for a dancing career, he earned his union papers as an industrial machinist before moving to Sydney where he tried to break into show business. Small chorus parts in Broadway-style musicals led to Dein's big break where he was cast in the long running Sydney production of *42nd Street*. When it closed, Dein decided to create a contemporary show around the themes of his industrial experience with his Newcastle tap dancing mates.

With a small government grant, Dein contacted his old friends, who had also taken up various "real" jobs by this time, and formed "Tap Brothers"; a very early incarnation of TAP DOGS. From this, Dein was offered the chance to choreograph the West End musical, *Hot Shoe Shuffle*, which brought the group to London and earned Dein his first Olivier Award in 1995. A subsequent offer from the Sydney Theatre Company led to the collaboration with eclectic designer and director Nigel Triffitt, which has resulted in the creation of TAP DOGS.

TAP DOGS was the instant hit of the Sydney Festival where it had its world premiere in January 1995 - it caused an equal sensation at the Edinburgh Festival later that year. TAP DOGS went on to play to packed houses at Sadler's Wells in London; return tours of Australia; a West End engagement, for which Dein won a second consecutive Olivier Award in 1996 for his choreography of TAP DOGS; and an off-Broadway, New York season in 1997. So far the company have won eleven International Awards, including a Pegasus Award at the Spoleto Festival in Italy and an Obie in New York.

Between 1998 and 2001 Tap Dogs have been touring the world with up to four companies at a time reaching audiences throughout the far-flung corners of Europe, Asia, America and Australia. The Australian dance sensation returned home in 2000 to take part in the opening ceremony of the Sydney Olympic Games. 1000 Tap Dogs from companies around the world performed to an audience of 3.4 billion viewers as the event was televised around the world.

The TAP DOGS story has gone on to be immortalized in the movie *BOOTMEN*, directed by Dein Perry and inspired by his Tap Dogs experiences. The film was financed by the Australian Film Finance Corporation and Fox Searchlight and distributed by Twentieth Century Fox. *Bootmen* was released in October 2000 and received 5 AFI awards.

In August 2003 Dein reworked the TAP DOGS concept by adding 2 female dancers and opened the new show TAP DOGS RE-BOOTED at Sadler's Wells in London, which has since toured very successfully to the United States. In 2005, Tap Dogs will celebrate their 10th anniversary, with a tour commencing in Australia, before touring worldwide.

Tap Dogs are represented exclusively by HLA Management PTY LTD within Australia

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