



HOTFOOT ONLINE

STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE

*NEW DIRECTIONS
AND DEVELOPMENTS*



AUTUMN 2020

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FOREWORD

This Autumn issue of *HOTFOOT* continues with the theme of *Strategies for Change*. It features voices from the sector to highlight perspectives on how they are coping professionally with the challenges that have come with the times. You may call it resilience, survival or self-care. What is clear is the passion that is helping us to surf the waves of change, to do what we do best for ourselves and for others.

I hope you enjoy the selection of articles including reviews of events presented with strategies adapted for the digital space; responses and reflections on the impact of the Black Lives Matter movement and COVID-19; as well as some information on how we get back to the dance!

As planned, we also share Part Two of the Action Plan Framework for the One Dance UK's Dance of the African Diaspora (DAD) work, moving forward with the necessary adjustments. If you haven't already, reach out to be included in our ongoing I Move campaign to share your work with others in the sector.

Keep safe.

MERCY NABIRYE
CONSULTANT HEAD OF DANCE OF THE
AFRICAN DIASPORA



WAX PRINT

We have retained the Spring 2020 edition's beautiful print as the key artwork for this issue. Butterflies are a symbol of change, rebirth, beauty and transformation. In keeping with the theme of 'Strategies for Change', it is perhaps a reminder to face change with grace and subtleness to transform energy into beautiful and vibrant creations, particularly at this time of great upheaval.

Nevertheless, we need to visualise more practical concepts like strategic planning, setting realistic agendas, reviewing and rethinking scenarios in partnerships and looking at what is out there and around us in abundance.

What are you willing to let go of that no longer serves your highest good or new normal?

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WELCOME

Dear members and friends

2020 has brought challenges none of us could have foreseen. The dance sector has had to review the way the art form is taught, created, performed and administered. What has not changed, however, is the passion and creativity of those working in dance. One Dance UK has been at the forefront of the conversation fighting for dance in all its forms.

At One Dance UK we understand the additional pressures Black artists and other professionals face in dance. The need for Black dance artists to be seen, heard and respected has been brought sharply into focus, and we have continued our work to promote visibility and diversity with renewed vigour.

In the last few months, we have engaged in regular conversations with the dance of the African Diaspora (DAD) sector noting and responding to the very real concerns that exist (see page 22 for more information), created new communication platforms on social media, updated resources and have seen outstanding work by DAD professionals recognised in a range of One Dance UK Award categories, and the Queen's Honours.

I see *HOTFOOT* as a key asset in our body of work. Offering a high-profile platform for and by those working in DAD. It is unique and very important. In this issue you will find a range of fascinating content from diverse contributors. Dance can only benefit from hearing from new, emerging voices alongside more established ones, and in the following pages you will get insights from both.

One Dance UK exists to represent you, our members, and the sector at large, and we really enjoy exchanging and sharing knowledge and ideas. The team is here to listen - we look forward to hearing your feedback on this latest issue, about the challenges facing us all and your innovative responses to them, and we will continue to support and champion your work in new ways through these difficult times. Together we are stronger.

Warmest wishes to you and your families from all of us at One Dance UK.

ANDREW HURST
CHIEF EXECUTIVE, ONE DANCE
UK

Join Us

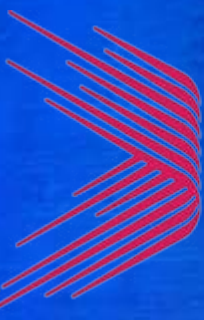
Find out what we can do for you

One Dance UK membership benefits include:

- A range of tailored products and services and resources at your disposal
- Free advice on business, teaching, health and regular talks on a wide range of subjects
- Add your voice to our advocacy work
- Industry news and updates
- Free copies of dance industry magazine *One* delivered to your door or inbox
- Option to join our Choreographers Directory or our Healthcare Practitioners Directory
- Promote your work through our social media channels with over 100,000 followers
- Significant member discounts on advertising across all of One Dance UK's platforms including *HOTFOOT*, *One* magazine and more



Axam Dance Theatre Experience at Regenerations International Conference 2019,
photo Foteini Christofilopoulou



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View the various One Dance UK memberships [here](#).

If you have any questions about membership, please email membership@onedanceuk.org or call 0207 713 0730

HOTFOOT EDITORIAL FOCUS GROUP NEW FACES



Rosa Cisneros © Haluk Sengun

The *HOTFOOT* Editorial Focus Group (EFG) consists of diverse professionals with keen interest and experience in dance of the African Diaspora styles. They work with the *HOTFOOT* editorial team by helping initiate and steer conversation, connecting further with the sector and offering invaluable advice and support.

The One Dance UK team would like to warmly welcome two new professionals to the EFG, joining existing members Dr Sarahleigh Castelyn and Dr 'Funmi Adewole. Alison Ray and Rosa Cisneros bring unique experiences and points of view that will serve to enhance the magazine's content and reach.

ROSA CISNEROS PhD

Rosa is a dancer and choreographer, dance historian and critic, Romani studies scholar, sociologist, flamenco historian and peace activist who completed her Master's in Dance History and Criticism from UNM-Albuquerque (USA) and PhD in Sociology. She is currently a Research Fellow at Coventry University's Centre for Dance Research (C-DaRE).

She has taught dance all over the world, is a prolific dance writer. Rosa is leading and



Alison Ray © Khris Morestead

involved in various EU funded projects which aim to make education accessible to vulnerable groups and ethnic minorities and sits on various boards: Roma Coventry Project (UK), Drom Kotar Mestipen Roma Women's Association (Spain), the Early Dance Circle (UK) among others.

ALISON RAY MA

Alison completed her MA of Choreography at Trinity Laban, and works as a choreographer, movement director, director, teacher and lecturer. She has worked professionally for various choreographers from Europe, Africa and the UK, including Peter Badejo, Koffi Koko, Maurice Bejart, Craig Revel Horwood and many more.

She is Director of Alison Ray Dance Company and is currently developing *Unknown Soldier*, an interdisciplinary work based on the stories of the Black British War veteran. She is developing her research skills in documenting the history of dance of the African Diaspora from the UK and around the globe.

The One Dance UK team would like to sincerely thank the previous members of the EFG, Dr Bob Ramdhanie MBE and the late Thea Barnes, who have been instrumental in the development of *HOTFOOT* over a period of many years.

FREELANCE TASK FORCE

BY JEANEFER JEAN-CHARLES



Jeanefer Jean-Charles

13 days, 98 meetings, 20 amazing freelance dance artists....

In July, I was invited onto the Freelance Task Force (FTF). A 13-day paid contract, sponsored by One Dance UK, in recognition of the loss of work for freelancers. This initiative was established by Fuel Theatre to address the needs and demands of the freelance sector. The focus included pay structure, guiding principles, anti-racism and inclusion – I decided to join the FTF Dance subgroup and concentrate my energies on Black Lives Matter.

As an Artistic Director and Choreographer for 20+ years, it wasn't until I joined the FTF that I realized how much of the work I do is unpaid. And during lockdown, we freelancers lacked not only pay, but also a voice. So, I formed *Where are all the Black people in dance?* initiative (WAATBD) to address the diversity gap. Subsequently, I joined the 'Black People in Dance in the UK' collective (BPDUK). This paid time allowed me to attend meetings, produce open Zoom forums and raise awareness to address the gap in representation, seek support from my community as well as to continue networking.



The funding for the FTF has now come to an end and I am hoping we can secure in-kind support and funding for the FTF Dance subgroup to continue dialogue with our 400+ database and the decision makers.

I am delighted that BPDUK has secured some funding from Arts Council England to focus on next steps, and that One Dance UK has agreed to continue supporting these initiatives. I trust we can affect progress through action.

It is important to build relationships with influential bodies in order to generate future funding. WAATBD, BPDUK and FTF Dance are key in harnessing the beliefs of this sector and using them as a force for change.



WWW.FREELANCETASKFORCE.CO.UK

NEWS

BLACK BRITISH THEATRE AWARDS



David Blake © David Mensah



Kenrick 'H2O' Sandy © David Mensah

The 2020 Black British Theatre Awards was a vibrant affair. In its first televised year, the awards aired on Sky Arts and was hosted by BBC presenter and comedic actor Eddie Nestor. The house band ShezAr and the Soul Sirens provided a rocking, soulful throughout the night. It was a socially-distanced affair attended by nominees in 28 categories, but the distancing was hardly noticed as the leading Black performers and creatives in UK theatre sang, danced and cheered each other on as the publicly voted awards were presented.

Kenrick 'H2O' Sandy MBE from Boy Blue Ent created standout moments with his rhythmic acceptances of 'Best Choreographer Award' and 'Best Dance Performance in a Dance Production Award', both for *REDD* at Barbican Theatre. Kenrick requested a soca rhythm from the band and got the audience hyped up as he danced and collected his choreography award with longtime music director and collaborator Mikey J Asante. Impact Dance's Artistic Director Hakeem Onibudo presented Kenrick with his dance award, for which Kenrick delivered a UK Garage style rap accompanied by the band in full effect.

Other stand out dance moments included David Blake's win for 'Best Teacher of Performing Arts as a Subject' at WAC Arts and Ballet Black's win for 'Best Dance Production Award' for *Ingoma* at Barbican Theatre.

There were three new award categories this year. The Black British Theatre Awards championed intersectional representation with 'The Disability Champion Award' won by Rachel Nwokoro and 'LGBTQ+ Champion Award' won by Layton Williams. In a year where we've seen theatres and artists utilise technology to engage global audiences in the magic of theatre, the new 'Best Use Of Innovation And Technology Award' was awarded to Nicole Raquel Dennis and Ryan Carter for *Turn Up London* at Cadogan Hall. The Black British Theatre Awards is available to watch on Sky Arts catch up service.



WWW.BLACKBRITISHTHEATREAWARDS.COM

BLACK VICTORIANS SUMMER PERFORMANCE RECEIVES ACCLAIM



Black Victorians © Stephen Wright

The Greenwich & Docklands International Festival took innovative steps in its 25th year to provide world-class entertainment in a range of south London locations that respected social distancing. On 29-30 August, choreographer Jeanfer Jean-Charles presented *Black Victorians* to much acclaim. The Victorian St George's Garrison Church hosted the performances, where audiences could experience history as told through choreography.

The piece is inspired by nineteenth century studio photographs of black men, women and children. Exploring a complex, but often forgotten black presence in pre-Windrush Britain, the performances called attention to previously "hidden figures" and challenged historical and contemporary perceptions.

A four-star review in *The Stage* noted: "Jean-Charles draws parallels between the photographs' stiff, formal poses and the stultifying societal constraints surrounding these individuals. Her choreography features muscular, precise movements, the dancers'

bodies alternately flinching in struggle or pirouetting gracefully, poised between the restrained and the expressive.

"Designer Marsha Roddy's costumes build on the tension between power, class and clothing, contrasting austere tailcoats and voluminous skirts with vivid, patterned fabrics. A compelling score from DJ Walde ties it all together, with loops of juddering, tense strings layered over pounding bass notes. Snatches of recorded poetry rise above the rumble, repeatedly and pointedly demanding: 'Is any of this comfortable?'"



WWW.JEANEFER.COM

NEWS

BIRMINGHAM BLACK DANCE PIONEER RECEIVES BIRTHDAY HONOUR FROM THE QUEEN



Gail Parmel - performing in ACE dance and music's *Skin*, © Brian Slater

Gail Parmel, Artistic Director of groundbreaking Birmingham dance company ACE dance and music, is to receive an MBE in The Queen's birthday honours list. Gail, who founded the multi-award winning Company together with her husband Ian Parmel in 1997, has been recognised by the Palace for her services to dance and art in Birmingham during a career that has spanned a quarter of a century.

A native of Leeds, Parmel graduated from Northern School of Contemporary Dance in 1996 and launched ACE dance and music in Birmingham the following year. Her work with ACE dance and music, with its world-class international profile, has consistently been driven by her commitment to intercultural collaboration, fusing the traditions of the African and Caribbean with a myriad of global influences in her own unique vision of contemporary dance. She has consistently championed opportunity for young dancers, co-founding ACE Youth just a year into the life of ACE dance and music, followed by the

formation of ACE Graduates in 2012. Both of these talent development programmes now have international recognition in their own right.

In 2019 she received the highest accolade awarded by the Northern School of Contemporary Dance by being made an Honorary Fellow and in summer next year Parmel will also receive an Honorary Fellowship from the University of Wolverhampton in recognition of her educational and vocational work in the arts.

Parmel said *"I am truly delighted and honoured to receive such a prestigious award and indeed even to have been nominated. When I received the letter, I was overwhelmed. I was truly humbled to think that someone had thought enough of my contribution to dance and consider it worthy of an honour."*



www.acedanceandmusic.com



You are invited...

One Dance UK Awards 27 November 2020, 7pm

Celebrate, acknowledge and reward the people who have made an impact on the UK dance landscape.

Filmed at The Courtyard in Hereford
Hosted by Akosua Boakye BEM



It's time to raise a glass to dance artists, teachers, educators, choreographers, companies, scientists, marketers and more as One Dance UK celebrate the Dance Sector! The glittering night will also see the announcement of the recipients of the prestigious Lifetime Achievement Awards for Dance Education, Contemporary Dance and Dance of the African Diaspora.

With over a thousand public nominations and over six thousand public votes for the People's Choice Award, the ceremony will be One Dance UK's widest reaching yet. So get yourself ready for a night of celebration and shining stars!

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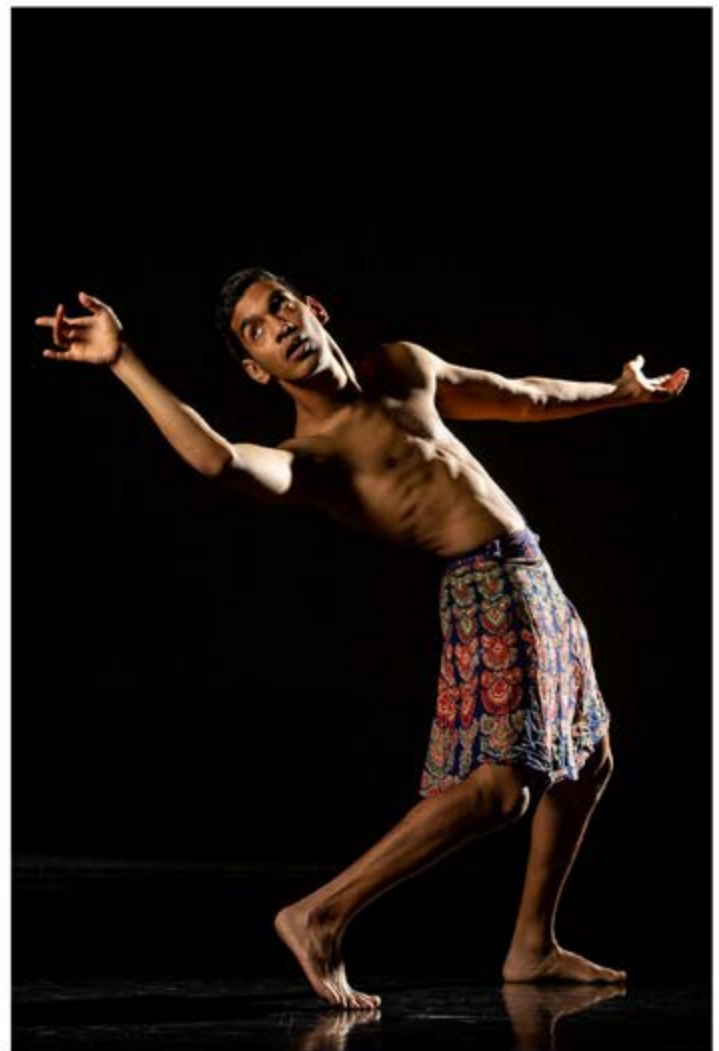
Our BA Dance, BA Performing Arts, and MA Dance courses nurture dynamic performers, choreographers, teachers, and producers through exciting practical projects with industry connections throughout the North West UK. Investigate choreography, site dance, teaching, urban and street dance, musical theatre, community practice, performance technology, and more in our specialist facilities. As a citizen student you will be challenged, supported, and inspired to make dance for the 21st century, apace with our changing world.

We are now accepting applications for 2021 entry, with auditions online and at our Creative Campus.

For BA courses through UCAS, use codes Dance W500 and Performing Arts W470. For further information on these courses including how to apply for the MA Dance please visit:

www.chester.ac.uk/music-media-and-performance

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www.mdx.ac.uk/perform

A decorative graphic element consisting of a large yellow circle with a semi-circular cutout at the top and bottom. The cutouts reveal a pattern of dark, stylized tree branches against a blue background, with a warm, orange and yellow light source visible through the branches, resembling a stained glass window or a sunset scene.

**TAK
ACT**

ING
ION



PART 2 OF 3

ACTION PLAN

CONTINUING ACTIONS

based on One Dance UK's Dance of the African Diaspora Mapping Report

Starting with Spring 2020 we are sharing two goals, with a call to action, across three consecutive editions of *HOTFOOT*.

[SEE PART 1 OF THE ACTION PLAN HERE](#)

FULL MAPPING REPORT

INFOGRAPHIC 1

INFOGRAPHIC 2

In the *HOTFOOT* Spring 2020 edition we shared key findings, themes and goals that resulted from the Dance of the African Diaspora Mapping Survey. We also shared an Action Plan for two of the six goals which shape our framework for actioning change, along with outcomes from the World Café discussions at 2019's Re:generations International Conference. As promised, in this edition we share two more goals we have committed to in the short to medium term. It is critical in these uncertain times to find ways of keeping visible, connected, and sharing with peers to ensure that momentum to develop DAD is not lost.

Thank you to those who responded to the call to action in the Spring *HOTFOOT* edition, sharing initiatives that they are working on or happening in the sector. One Dance UK has been active in promoting and connecting DAD artists and projects. In June, One Dance UK launched a social media campaign, *I Move*, which shines a spotlight on artists, art forms, initiatives and increasing visibility for DAD. See page 37 for further information. The DAD community Facebook group was recently revamped to directly link to One Dance UK's 90,000 followers and friends.

Additionally, in June One Dance UK held three rounds of talks with DAD organisations and individuals to be guided on their key concerns for returning to work in relation to COVID-19. We added this evidence to the submission to the Department for Digital, Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) select committee enquiry, calling for targeted intervention, particularly on diversity. Our concern is that diversity in dance has made a huge stride in the last decade but is not where it should be and is in danger of being reversed. See page 22 for further information.



SIX EMERGING THEMES, SIX GOALS

THEME	<i>FUNDRAISING AND SUSTAINABILITY</i> GOAL 1: IMPROVEMENT IN SUCCESSFUL FUNDRAISING AND SUSTAINABILITY
THEME	<i>EDUCATION AND TRAINING</i> GOAL 2: IMPROVEMENT FOR A DAD EDUCATION AND TRAINING INFRASTRUCTURE
THEME	<i>NETWORKS AND KNOWLEDGE GAP</i> GOAL 3: PROVIDING SUPPORT TO BUILD NETWORKS TO SHARE AND REDUCE THE KNOWLEDGE GAP ACROSS THE SECTOR
THEME	<i>VISIBILITY AND PLATFORMS</i> GOAL 4: INCREASING THE QUANTITY, RANGE AND STRENGTH OF VISIBILITY OF DAD STYLES
THEME	<i>LEGACY AND ARCHIVES</i> GOAL 5: URGENCY TO DOCUMENT LEGACY, OPEN UP AND INCREASE ARCHIVES
THEME	<i>AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT AND ENGAGEMENT</i> GOAL 6: MORE AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY AND INCREASED ENGAGEMENT ACROSS A RANGE OF SETTINGS

KEY FINDINGS

- The sector had developed over the past 5 years however in varying degrees (e.g. geographically)
- DAD is strongly rooted in connection to Africa
- African Contemporary practice dominates the sector
- Women make up the majority of practitioners
- The self-employed and sole traders are predominant in the sector
- The DAD sector is demographically diverse
- The sector is strongly community focused
- London remains the hotspot for DAD work and education in the UK



PART 2 OF 3

WORLD CAFÉ OUTCOMES

Share what already exists – identify and link the different networks locally, nationally and internationally

- Advocacy/advocating – who/where are the open doors?
- Rural and regional touring networks – understanding the touring landscape
- Local community enterprise partnerships (lots of information/resources are available)
- Surveys & distribution of information sometimes is not accessible (different formats exist)
- Link membership to build networks and bring everyone together

Youth conference about dance & digital, building networks for the future

- Incorporate youth to build a more sustainable future
- Webinars that are inclusive & intergenerational held regularly through the year, global reach
- Identify where youth conferences already exist - happening in digital spaces
- Identify which webinar topics are relevant for people in the sector
- Build a strategy around engaging an individual throughout their career – enable progression within the sector
- Understanding of histories and ancestry through shared beliefs
- Utilise agencies, dance alliances, newsletters, dance training resources to share information

GOAL 3

PROVIDING SUPPORT TO BUILD NETWORKS TO SHARE AND REDUCE THE KNOWLEDGE GAP ACROSS THE SECTOR

MEASURE: By December 2021, develop or support a scheme which enables intergenerational networking, sharing and peer to peer learning, and collating resources, at least twice per year.

ACTION

- Build on and expand on the Mapping Report including information from World Café and current initiatives.
- Package versions of the report specific to various stakeholders and partners in digital and print format (potentially for sale), e.g. artists and practitioners, funders, venues, education institutions, corporate organisations, arts institutions etc.
- Set up webinars as a regular online resource for the sector, inviting key contributors biannually



GOAL 4

INCREASING THE QUANTITY, RANGE AND STRENGTH OF VISIBILITY OF DAD STYLES

MEASURE: By December 2021, at least three strategic partnerships forged to collaborate with One Dance UK on providing platforms and promoting artists and their work

WORLD CAFÉ OUTCOMES

- Building own 'tribe' and audience to switch the dependency mindset or point of view
- Artists/practitioners taking control of maintaining own destiny, discourse and narrative with audiences
- Developing digital and other networks to enhance the building process – e.g. podcasts, educational resources from past and present
- Build trust internally and externally
- Continue to knock on doors

ACTION

- Negotiations with potential partners to jointly deliver or support the presentation/promotion of artists and their work
- Schedule regular networking events and signpost artists to networks
- Profiling individuals and work on social media platforms
- Brokering relationships: peer-to-peer and across organisations
- Identify leaders, networks and initiatives created in the sector and support growth



YOUR CALL TO ACTION TODAY

SHARE the initiatives you are working on or that you know are happening which can benefit the wider sector

SUGGEST areas which you or other partners can be involved in

EMAIL your feedback, comments or further suggestions to hotfoot@onedanceuk.org

DANCE OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA SECTOR CONSULTATION



Tribhangi Dance Theatre perform at Re:generations International Conference 2019, © Dani Bower for One Dance UK

As the COVID-19 pandemic took hold, the One Dance UK team held regular meetings with professionals from the UK's DAD sector to gauge the atmosphere, note what was needed, and make recommendations as we move forward together from the crisis. On these pages you will find the key themes that emerged.

To give feedback and suggestions, please email hotfoot@onedanceuk.org.

RETURN TO DANCE
WEBINAR: COVID-19
VULNERABILITY
AND EQUALITY AND
DIVERSITY

RETURN TO
ALL DANCE
WEBINARS

KEY FINDINGS

- COVID-19 has caused a higher devastation in communities with diverse backgrounds than the national demographic:
 - » Dance organisations and individuals offering participatory work should be supported to provide more pastoral care to address mental health and wellbeing in communities with diverse backgrounds
 - » DAD organisations and individuals should be upskilled and funded to address mental health and wellbeing in participatory programmes
 - » People from diverse backgrounds and disabled audiences that traditionally have been difficult to get into venues will need more clearly, communicated guidance from Government to trust returning to performance spaces
- DAD freelancers and independent artists need to be specially considered in governmental (Arts Council England, Creative Scotland etc.) future funding schemes to reduce the loss of diversity in dance and the dance workforce
- Clear fitness and training guidance is needed to get dancers back to performance level and into studios, rehearsals and performance spaces.
- As many of those from diverse backgrounds are in a lower socio-economic demographic, the loss of DAD dancers and other professionals who are forced to earn outside dance will require more support and time to bring those persons back to the sector
- Artists and venues should work together to consider the time and space needed to create new work and imaginatively present it together in discussions with audiences
- On reopening, national venues or co-producers may seek popular repertoire with new or less popular DAD work being disadvantaged in priority
- Investment in researching the creation of digital content and a monetised business model for audiences
- Clear guidance and safety guidelines from Government on different travel restrictions, reopening of UK embassies for visas and intervention with insurers are essential for international tourers to have confidence in making future financial commitments and plans
- Opportunity to review curriculum within education settings to offer more diverse content

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SECTOR

The below is a snapshot of the issues that were identified during the consultations. For more recommendations go to the full document here:

[CLICK TO VIEW THE FULL REPORT](#)

FREELANCERS AND INDEPENDENT ARTISTS

More medium-term income support is needed for freelancers as they make up a significant part of the performing arts sector (70%) and the loss of freelancers from dance will have a more devastating impact on diversity.

Diverse freelancers are also important to the delivery of community and participatory work. Freelancers from diverse backgrounds will need upskilling, resources and strategic support to provide more pastoral care and programmes that address mental health and wellbeing in communities that have been harder hit by COVID-19 and retain these practitioners.

Clear guidance on safety protocols in all aspects of returning to work – studio, performance, classes, and participatory - enabling producers to plan for the future nationally and internationally.

MID-SCALE TOURING COMPANIES

Clear guidance on safety protocols for dancers moving to and from studio and performance space, safety at work and the responsibility of employers.

Diverse and disabled audiences that traditionally have been difficult to get into venues will need more clearly, communicated guidance from Government to trust returning to performance spaces.

On reopening, venues and/or co-producers may seek popular repertoire, with new or less popular work at lower priority, and therefore disadvantaged. The work of those from diverse backgrounds is particularly affected by this. Companies will need a longer and minimum level of support to rebuild networks.

DANCE – COMMUNITY AND PARTICIPATORY

Companies and individuals from diverse backgrounds will need upskilling, resources and strategic support to provide more pastoral care and programmes that address mental health and wellbeing in communities and retain practitioners.

The move to digital and online classes has left large segments of those they work with behind. Young people in particular often lack access to digital devices and older people struggle to engage. There is a real digital deficit which will cause a significant gap on re-opening which will need to be dealt with.

In schools, will young people still be allowed to take part in dance, particularly those from lower socio-economic backgrounds? Participatory organisations for those from diverse backgrounds are also the gateway for attracting young, diverse people to dance and will need to be protected in the sector's recovery plans.

DANCE VENUES – SMALL TO MID-SCALE

Costs to office and venue holders to make workspaces COVID-19 ready are supported by grants from Government, ACE, Creative Scotland. Companies are required to hang a poster saying they've met guidelines.

Income for small to mid-scale venues rely on studio/room hires, participatory work and Trusts other than Box Office receipts. Companies will need support to bridge the gap to fully return to earning from these sources again.

Discussions with artists and venues on how they can work together to consider the time and space needed to create new work and imaginatively present it together in discussions with audiences.

INTERNATIONAL TOURING

Clear guidance and safety guidelines from Government on different travel restrictions, visas after Brexit and a period of less investment.

Quarantine, whether bringing performing arts companies/artists into or out of the UK and the different approaches across the globe creates high uncertainty and near impossibility for planning in the medium term – 12+ months.

Government intervention with insurance providers and force majeure clauses is needed to reduce the additional risk of international touring and ensure international tourers can invest with confidence.

EDUCATION

Opportunity to review curriculum within Further/Higher Education modules to see where and/or how diverse dance styles can be best included, not just as an add-on but integral to students' training and learning experience.

Link diverse artists and/or academics with FE and HE institutions to discuss partnerships/collaborations to address culture and diversity in training, capacity building of staff and infrastructure.

Engage in the remodeling of delivery in order to improve access routes for diverse groups of young people who may not have come from traditional dance backgrounds through greater inclusion of diverse dance forms.

BEYOND BLACK LIVES MATTER

HOW TO BUILD AN ANTI-RACIST DANCE COMMUNITY

BY AMANDA PARKER
*DIRECTOR OF INC ARTS UK, WHICH
CAMPAIGNS FOR GREATER INCLUSION
IN THE ARTS SECTOR WORKFORCE*



BY AMANDA PARKER
DIRECTOR OF INC ARTS UK

WWW.INCARTS.UK 

***In the dark times
Will there also be singing?
Yes, there will also be singing
About the dark times.***

*Bertolt Brecht,
motto to Svendborg Poems, 1939*

As we went into lockdown I, like so many others, found myself in an almost overwhelming number of Zoom meetings. Despite the horror of circumstances, I was struck by the warmth and collaboration of the creative community, which came as naturally as breathing.

Whilst I fully understood that there was more darkness to come, I was reassured by the collective reimagining that took place across geographical boundary and artistic practice, that, yes, there would still be both singing and dancing. But then data laid truths bare: ethnically diverse people are at higher risk of fatality from COVID-19 infection.

Suggested factors contributing to the poor outcomes range from the front line (read, 'low income') roles diverse workers held, through to underlying health disadvantages common to people working at the margins, facing daily stress resulting from micro aggressions and financial and societal exclusion.

Then the brutal murder of George Floyd ripped the lid off the long sustained and everyday complacency around ethnicity.

" IT IS NOT AN EASY TIME TO BE ETHNICALLY DIVERSE IN THE ARTS. IT NEVER HAS BEEN, BUT NOW OTHERS HAVE A SLIVER OF INSIGHT INTO JUST HOW CHALLENGING IT IS. "

Amanda Parker



Serendipity - Ronald K. Brown Evidence, A Dance Company at Let's Dance International Frontiers 2019, Curve, Leicester. © Stuart Hollis

DIVERSE – AND AT RISK

Ethnically diverse people in the UK are more likely to work in jobs that are at risk from COVID-19 related furloughs and layoffs in the short term. And in the creative and cultural sector, a sector with poor traction with ethnic diversity in the workforce, the diversity that exists is found in jobs and roles most at risk of redundancy. As the sector continues to reimagine our post-COVID landscape in terms of 'delivering and developing our core offer' and 'taking productions back to the essentials' there is a well-placed fear that this means that the areas where there is most diversity are also at most risk of being excised from cultural productivity. Our young, diverse emerging talent is already seeing training and development being put on pause.

Front of house roles are cut to the core. Those independent practitioners who are making outstanding contributions to the UK's health, wellbeing and engagement through producing community based work, and projects that address and redress social isolation are all now wondering how the government's emphasis on 'protecting the crown jewels' of the arts relates to them, and their future careers.

Recent Arts Council England guidelines for those making redundancies includes a clear recommendation to retain ethnic diversity in our cultural production: 'it is vitally important that decision making and the treatment of people does not result in less favourable treatment of employees due to a protected characteristic. Do not make decisions based on protected characteristics, such as which employees are given extra hours, chosen to work from home or made redundant'.

However, here's the reality:

- In the UK, dance has some of the highest levels of ethnic diversity amongst its performance community, though it's nothing to write home about: at 15% of the permanent staff workforce being ethnically diverse (compared to some 10% in theatre).
- Ethnically diverse workers in all sectors already earn less than their non-diverse peers. Office for National Statistics figures suggest a gap of between 5% and 10% between earnings for the UK's white workforce and Black workforce.

- And within dance there is a widely held belief, and well trodden argument, that less status is ascribed to non-Western classical dance forms – from which we can fairly confidently assume that this translates into salaries too.
- We should all be championing and celebrating those ethnically diverse makers who have so far managed to sustain and develop their artistic practice, despite the daily challenges.

BARRIERS TO PROGRESS

Inc Arts is working with a cohort of Black dance practitioners, who have shared with us their concerns about a safe supported return to work. They face the medically verified knowledge that whilst there is no vaccine, they remain more at risk from a COVID-19 infection.

As a result, ethnically diverse dancers fear that their higher risk from infection may further disadvantage them. If choreographers and companies choose to work with dancers at less risk from infection, rather than establish and implement the robust impact assessments that Inc Arts and others have been

A MESSAGE FROM ONE DANCE UK



MERCY NABIRYE
CONSULTANT HEAD
OF DANCE OF THE
AFRICAN DIASPORA,
ONE DANCE UK

Our vision at One Dance UK embeds an underlying principle for dance of the

African Diaspora to thrive and be valued as part of the necessary diversity across the sector. It is our duty to maintain this custodial role and bring voices to the forefront towards a permanent change.

This lockdown has brought into light the structural weaknesses present in our society at many levels and what I see with the current affairs is a triple crisis – with economy, health and race relations. The overarching message in the voices we have highlighted allude to the fact that returning to 'business as usual' will not be sufficient to prevent future crises. We need to reposition and 'begin again', albeit working within the parameters of a somewhat unknown future still unfolding.

lobbying for, then ethnically diverse dancers find themselves in a triple bind of risk to health, earnings and career development.

There have been reports that this eschewing of ethnically diverse workers is already happening in some pockets of the sector. This is not a micro aggression, or an unwittingly unfortunate by-product of our collective uncertainty about managing infection rates: it's a racist outcome that sits most heavily on those already disadvantaged within the creative community. The dance community has huge scope to reimagine its future: there's great appetite for dance engagement amongst under 18s. In London, the move east for both English National Ballet, and Sadler's Wells East (in 2022) offers exciting potential for systemic change.

However, there is still much work to do for these and other organisations seeking to engage with the ethnically diverse communities they'll soon find themselves in. The slipperiness of the term 'community engagement', the persistent downgrading of dance forms that are not within the Western classical cannon, the strong hierarchy of status that persists in many conversations and decisions about dance forms and funding, serves to disadvantage those who are not just building the talent pipeline, but are also the talented dancers who deserve greater funding, recognition and reward.

VOICES FROM THE SECTOR



BRANDON LAWRENCE
PRINCIPAL DANCER,
BIRMINGHAM
ROYAL BALLET

The severity of recent incidents during the COVID-19 pandemic has forced the questions of race, privilege and equality to be asked yet again. This played on my mind and provided the seeds for BODIES, which was made entirely in lockdown with a team of five. I felt compelled to speak through art and collaborate with passionate individuals to create this film.

I believe my growth thus far has taught me that although we are all from different walks of life, we should endeavour to treat each other with respect and understanding, no matter what our backgrounds are. Remembering always: racism is taught, not inherited.



CREATIVE FUTURE THINKING

For ethnically diverse dancers and practices to thrive in an anti-racist future sector, we need four things to happen. The first is to truly ensure that ethnicity is not lost in redundancy rounds. This requires radical thinking around what our 'core artistic offer is', because we already know that the majority of what ends up on stage is not diverse. The 'core offer' must face the audiences and communities we work within, and this fundamental revision of 'artistic outcomes' means organisations can value, and retain those dancers who are creating works and building learning and training opportunities that speak to those people under-represented in the sector. We can lobby government, (including being represented via One Dance UK's All-Party Parliamentary Group), arts councils, and our local MPs, to ensure that section 159 of the Equalities Act (which allows for positive consideration of those with protected characteristics) can apply not only to promotion and recruitment, but also to redundancy and dismissal decisions.

We can encourage organisations to rethink their leadership model: a hierarchy that sits with a small body of nondiverse leaders at the top means that the routes to leadership are narrow, and inflexible. Can we reimagine our leadership practices, so that roles are shared in a flatter structure, that nurtures and develops diverse leadership? Our funding models also need rethinking: they need to recognise the

value of ethnically diverse dancers and leaders – punching above their weight, in the face of disadvantage, not just in creativity but in supporting the UK's health, wellbeing, community engagement and artistic talent development. Isn't it time for a funding route that is applicable to only ethnically diverse artists, that is managed and assessed by their diverse peers? This will create great opportunity in the future for this talent to be developed, amplified, celebrated and remunerated.

And finally, our diverse dance community needs to take on what for many is unappealing. You may not have come into the sector to be an administrator, a bid writer, a fundraiser but developing these skills will mean you are less at the mercy of others' artistic decisions – especially while opportunities for creating works are reduced. But these are the skills that will see us through current times, so that we can all one day be dancing - to the singing about the darkness that once was.

This article originally appeared in the Autumn edition of ONE, the One Dance UK magazine.

Further information

Follow Inc Arts' #CultureNeedsDiversity campaign:
www.incarts.uk/%23cultureneedsdiversity

¹Arts Council England Diversity statistics 2018/19; diversity of permanent workforce



HOMEBROS: KURTY SWIFT AND UNKLE TC
 ARTISTIC & CREATIVE DIRECTORS,
 CHOREOGRAPHERS,
 TEACHERS & DANCERS

We believe dance is art and it's a gift for anyone. As young Black men and

creatives we know the difficulties and struggles that come along with trying to be successful and push your craft. In terms of our role in the Afro Dance community, we always preach 'authenticity' and representing Africa and the culture properly. We always strive to pass down knowledge to the next generation so they understand and see the importance of African dance styles and the history of our culture wherever we go around the world.

As Black African men, who teach, mentor & create, we have a responsibility to protect and preserve our culture and history so it doesn't get diluted or lost or just treated as another trend. Our slogans are "Feeling First" and "Keep It Authentic."



KAMARA GRAY
 ARTISTIC DIRECTOR,
 ARTISTRY YOUTH
 DANCE

The core purpose of Artistry Youth Dance has always been to promote

diversity in dance. Black Lives Matter has reminded us of the urgency in which dance schools, and the wider industry, must be spaces where our Black students and dance artists can flourish.

Anti-racism must be embedded within an organisation's policies, procedures, and practices. I have organised panel discussions with leading dance and musical theatre schools and created resources for young people. It's now time for the dance industry to hold itself accountable, invest in, and implement the strategic changes needed.





Artistry Youth Dance © Pierre Tappon - smaller



PAWLET BROOKES
CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR,
SERENDIPITY UK

Nurturing the work of Black dance practitioners has always been integral to the work that we do at Serendipity. Black Lives

Matter has addressed the urgency with which we need to amplify voices from across the Black Diaspora, to make a positive change and to tell our own story.

I think that the words of Toni Morrison capture this: "This is precisely the time when artists go to work. There is no time for despair. No place for self-pity. No need for silence. No room for fear. We speak. We write. We do language. That is how civilizations heal."



www.serendipity-uk.com



BOTIS SEVA
OLIVIER AWARD-
WINNING
CHOREOGRAPHER,
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, FAR
FROM THE NORM

I feel that we have a long way to go but I have hope that we can educate our

sons and daughters for them to deal with this crisis in another way. I don't have the answers. I also feel I don't do enough. It takes time to really articulate how you really feel and the best way for me to express is through visual storytelling. My practice will always speak on how I feel about being oppressed and beaten down. Constantly, it feels like a never-ending battle but, I'm learning each day to take my time; to educate myself and deal with my flaws- change will definitely come.



Watch **Can't Kill Us All**



GEN 2020 choreographed by Botis Seva as part of a cultural exchange between South Korean artists and the UK's Far From the Norm © Alice Underwood.

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A decorative graphic element consisting of a central yellow circle with two semi-circular shapes extending upwards and downwards from its top and bottom edges. These shapes reveal a pattern of stained glass windows with blue, orange, and black colors.

STRATEG DEVELOPME

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BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2020 WAS NEVER GOING TO BE THE SAME...

BY LYNDA BURRELL

CREATIVE DIRECTOR, MUSEUMAND - THE NATIONAL CARIBBEAN HERITAGE MUSEUM

WWW.MUSEUMAND.ORG 

EXECUTIVE EDITOR, BLACK HISTORY MONTH MAGAZINE & WEBSITE

WWW.BLACKHISTORYMONTH.ORG.UK 

BIM2020

DIG DEEPER, LOOK CLOSER, THINK BIGGER

COVID-19 has taken far too many Black lives and livelihoods. The reasons for the disproportionate number of deaths has been discussed and debated and is still the subject of medical and Government enquiry. The reports will make interesting reading but what is hoped is that the recommendations are acted upon quickly, to halt the loss of talent from the Black community, and the loss of Black businesses that support its development.

It may seem strange, therefore, to say that some aspects of the pandemic have actually been useful to the Black community. Lockdown and self-isolation rules prevented mainstream media from making their usual programmes. TV channels' initial response was to put out re-runs of the public's favourite shows and exhaust their archives. Then, suddenly viewers were offered something new.

We began to see adverts and new film shorts that featured Black characters, or were directed and produced by Black people. TV was now really worth watching. The response in the Black community mirrored that of the 60s and 70s when people started contacting each other by phone, to tell family and friends to watch the phenomena of Black people appearing on screen.



"THE MONTH WAS A CHANCE TO FOCUS ON ALL THE HEROES THAT HAVE COME TO THE PUBLIC'S ATTENTION THROUGHOUT 2020"

Lynda Burrell

Dance workshop at Regenerations 2019 © Foteini Christofilopoulou

Black people, in all our glorious hues, weren't just appearing in adverts; the adverts actually featured scenarios reflecting Black people's lifestyles. We saw Black people interacting with one another in their homes, and people who looked like us enjoying leisure activities as a group. Via the modern technology of WhatsApp and YouTube we were buzzing as we shared details with each other.

Black talent was brightening content that brightened our experience of TV. This only got better when we were told that some of these adverts and TV programmes were made by Black people. Black people in front of and behind the camera?! This was indeed a silver lining to the grey clouds that Black people have come to expect.

Black talent was being showcased – from poetry and dance, to Black presenters fronting both mainstream shows and programmes specific to Black history and culture. Black confidence was there for all to see as we featured on news programmes and chat shows commenting on all the issues facing the world, sharing a Black perspective.

Black History Month 2020 was never going to be the same. In the past, we've used these 31 days to

focus on the past achievements and greatness of Black people around the world. This year, discussion and debate, programmes and publications, events, activities and activism, featured much more on the present. In 2020, the full richness of Black history and the truth about how it's been hidden and distorted by a colonial retelling of our shared British history has finally begun to emerge – in the media, in schools and workplaces, in homes and communities.

The month was a chance to focus on all the heroes that have come to the public's attention throughout 2020. The heroes on the frontline fighting COVID-19, in hospitals and communities throughout the UK; the #BlackLivesMatter heroes fighting racism across the world; the heroes dismantling the monuments and symbols of racism in our public spaces and institutions; the heroes that have used their platforms to challenge the powers that be, shine a new light on Black history and open the door to Black talent. This year, like never before, Black History Month served to remind everyone that Black People Can and that Black Lives Matter.

The talent genie that has only slowly been allowed to emerge from its bottle over the last 400 years is finally out like never before. The world is in for a treat.

JAZZ HANDS DOWN ITS HISTORY

WWW.UPROOTEDFILM.COM



[HTTP://BIT.LY/ESSENTIALGUIDETOJAZZDANCE](http://BIT.LY/ESSENTIALGUIDETOJAZZDANCE)



WWW.BOP.ORG.UK



CAMERON BALL
HOTFOOT EDITOR



Dollie © BOP Jazz Theatre Company

From their African roots, dozens of dance styles have evolved worldwide, including a myriad of jazz-based forms. There is a growing recognition that jazz dance styles should be given the historical credit they deserve, particularly in today's landscape of digital dance and changing social attitudes.

HOTFOOT Editor Cameron Ball talks to two leading advocates of jazz dance, Dollie Henry and Zak Nemorin, who have recently respectively released a book and a documentary addressing this very issue. Henry and Nemorin discuss the importance of acknowledging the past, what appropriation means to them in the current climate, and how to move forward sharing the message of the true origins of jazz.

For today's jazz dance lovers, there is an abundance of content to enjoy in class, on stage and on screen. It can be argued, however, that by chance or by design, audiences and students of jazz do not know the history of how these styles were developed from Africa to the Americas and the wider western world. Many of jazz dance's household names, such as Fred Astaire, Bob Fosse and Mia Michaels are white, and the structures in which many people access the forms are white-dominated, but it seems that change is finally afoot. With 2020's huge changes in both the way we access dance and a heightened awareness of Black people's perspectives and history of discrimination, it's particularly relevant that the story of jazz is being shared in new ways.

Jazz can trace its origins to Africa, where music and dance has been integral to people's lives throughout history. The rhythmic movement of the whole body, including the ribcage and hips, was markedly different to what white society was familiar with when



Zak Nemorin © Simon Mayhew



Dollie Henry, © Simon Richardson

"THAT JAZZ DANCE HAS SURVIVED AND THRIVED AND CONTINUED TO REINVENT AS AN ART FORM IS TESTAMENT TO ITS INIMITABLE SPIRIT."

Dollie Henry, *The Essential Guide to Jazz Dance*

enslaved people were brought to the Americas from the 16th to 19th centuries. This freedom of expression and physical aesthetic sets jazz apart from European stage and social dances, and, like the jazz music that accompanied the dances, the forms merged and new styles organically developed, both socially among Black people and more widely as entertainment (Augustyn et al, 2020). For example, on the stage, in the 19th century, 'minstrel show' performers developed tap dancing from a combination of Irish jigging, English clog dancing, and African rhythmic stamping (Willis et al, n.d.).

A new documentary, *Uprooted*, charts the journey of jazz dance, telling its story and interviewing some leading figures in today's jazz scene, from Mandy Moore, choreographer of *La La Land*, to hip hop historian and lecturer Moncell Durden, to Broadway icon Chita Rivera. Zak Nemorin, co-creator of the film, acknowledges this history: "We can only move forward if we understand where we came from. The world owes so much to the sharing of culture (especially Black cultures), but as Debbie Allen says so beautifully in our documentary, 'The universe is built on change and if nothing changes, it is stagnant. It is not alive.'"

Nemorin found the five-year journey of the award-winning film development to be one of discovery, particularly on the topic of origin and appropriation;

"I found there is a difference between 'migration', where ideas, thoughts and, indeed, movement travels from one group of people or place in the world to another and gradually takes on the feel and ideas of the new environment, and 'appropriation' where a person or people claim others' work or culture and call it their own. The interesting split between the two could be called "transmission", where a constant respectful transaction of ideas can occur, and in my view, is the way we should all go about our creative lives."

One interviewee in the film documentary, Dollie Henry, has been a jazz dance artist and advocate for forty years. The London-based jazz dance artist, choreographer, director and lecturer is Founder and Artistic Director of Body of People Jazz Theatre Company, a.k.a. BOP, the only jazz theatre company in the UK. She is passionate about telling the true story of jazz. She has recently published a book, *The Essential Guide to Jazz Dance*, which gives an overview of the style's multi-layered history, practices and development of the jazz dance idiom. Henry notes that "Jazz is its own unique artform which was developed through syncretism. Its lineage is rooted in the African creative tradition; it is an artform that is of a people for the people. As an inclusive artform it has clearly evolved and developed, reaching all corners of the globe and influencing many other artforms."

There is the ongoing risk that white artists commercialise and profit from the work of Black culture, which has happened countless times throughout history. As Henry notes, “Jazz has been appropriated for a century and more, following the early realisation that it could be commercially exploited. In jazz dance one would assume that all the important practitioners were white, because that is the taught history.”

Today’s technology has seen the rise of social media dance crazes and influencers, who often use jazz styles and are hugely influential among younger dance fans which could be seen as contributing to the problem. Nemorin says “TikTok currently holds the monopoly on much of what people see as dance on social channels and yes, African styles, steps and movement play a large part in our popular culture.” TikTok has had its own well-documented issues surrounding crediting Black creators – see Janice Gassam Asare’s Forbes.com article on this in the references list below.

He is keen to see the origins of dance styles shared in every setting but finds distinction between the recreational side of TikTok and more formal educational contexts. “While nobody is doubting social media platforms have a huge influence, they have their place for recreational dancers. A social media platform should not be viewed as a replacement for class. The studio is where we learn but running parallel to that, real cultural social events should be explored.”

Henry acknowledges the influence of these platforms and is clear that the matter of appropriation should be regularly challenged. She states “I do not know any dance creative who would have a problem with dance idioms or styles being ‘referenced’ into their own work. It is precisely how it is referenced and that the reference is clearly marked, either artistically or verbally.” Henry recommends that it starts with educating the next generation of dancers: “That can only happen if our education system is honest and reflects all social and cultural artistic history and context within it, which can clearly inform those teaching and those learning about the specific creatives/practitioners and the originators or trailblazers of the jazz dance art form.”



‘Jazz Tree’, an image from *Uprooted* © Daryl Getman

Nemorin, himself a jazz dance lecturer and choreographer, and Head of Jazz Dance at Millennium Performing Arts, agrees; “As educators, we have to do the research and drip in the information in every class, even if it’s as simple as the name of a step or who or where it may have come from. Sometimes the ‘why’ a step or movement exists can spark inspiration, as this seems to give more value and narrative to the work.”

So, when we watch Gene Kelly’s sublime footwork in *Singin’ in the Rain*, or imitate Beyoncé stomping it out in a music video, or perform a social media dance craze with its roots in jazz, we must appreciate the dance steps’

historical contexts. It is important we recognise that the movements’ origins are due to a clash of cultures which originated as a result of the slave trade that still scars many Black lives today as seen in recent rightful protests. It is up to all of us as dance professionals, students and aficionados of all races and cultures to learn more and share our knowledge about jazz styles, and 2020’s *Uprooted* and *The Essential Guide to Jazz Dance* are insightful and relevant resources.

This knowledge can only enhance our enjoyment and appreciation for the art form. As Henry reminds us, “Understanding creative lineage means recognising its starting point and acknowledging the position it holds in the artistic world today.”

Uprooted recently received its international premiere at the 2020 Raindance Film Festival.

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WHAT MOVES YOU?



One Dance UK's recently introduced I Move project aims to spotlight the exciting current and future work of UK-based dance of the African Diaspora (DAD) professionals: producers, choreographers, researchers, administrators and artists. We want to tell your story, why and how DAD motivates your work, the benefits it brings to the wider dance community and to the cultural landscape.



TAMAR DIXON
DANCE OF THE
AFRICAN DIASPORA
ADMINISTRATOR

Tamar Dixon, Dance of the African Diaspora Administrator, shares her vision on kick starting I Move and further thoughts on moving forward through change.

The future of DAD is progressive, yet still feels like we are climbing a steep hill in gaining the sector-wide recognition that it deserves. While DAD is still on the margins, it is quite evident that the underlying curiosity and involvement from many enthusiasts enables DAD projects to excel, particularly in community spaces. How do we enable DAD to be fully included in the mainstream and for it to reach its fullest capacity across our dance sector, educational institutions and wider community?

We are a dynamic workforce. 2020 has proven that we are resilient, unified, and fully capable of overcoming traumatic events that had the potential to strip us away. We are here and we are moving forward. 2020 moved us in a challenging and a rewarding direction. We continue to move boldly and unapologetically. We move through our language, rhythm, and expression.

What is your move for 2021?

WANT TO BE FEATURED IN THE ONGOING I MOVE CAMPAIGN?

Send in your dance photos/videos and up to 200 words about your work, your journey or your contributions to DAD.

E: hotfoot@onedanceuk.org
and tamar.dixon@onedanceuk.org or



to be involved.

WHAT MOVES YOU?

“ WHERE DO YOU SEE THE FUTURE OF DANCE OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA OR YOUR WORK? “



© Leah Cole Photography

AKEIM TOUSSAINT BUCK

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR,
TOUSSAINT TO MOVE

WHERE DO YOU SEE THE FUTURE OF DANCE OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA OR YOUR WORK?

My work lives in the British Caribbean post globalisation era. Because of this, I see it necessary to be on different mediums and to have a strong online presence. Film gives the capability to make dance for the stage and cinematic experiences, and this excites me. I'm interested in creating connections to the true motherland that is the continent of Africa, and to have a stronger connection with the Caribbean.



AHUK performance group at Special Olympics - Sheffield 2018. © Daniel Hamilton.

JUDITH PALMER MBE CEO OF AFRICAN HERITAGE UK

WHERE DO YOU SEE THE FUTURE OF DANCE OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA OR YOUR WORK?

There are two sides to every predicament and although this pandemic has brought many negatives, there are a few positives that will serve to benefit DAD in the not too distant future.

In my opinion the future of DAD looks promising, as long as we maintain and develop a global community through continued dialogue and collaboration, we have the potential to also develop a self-sufficient economy.

As for African Heritage UK (AHUK), we maintain our aim to preserve our dance traditions for posterity. The pandemic has nurtured growth in health and wellbeing pursuits, as well as in dance as an alternative approach. AHUK will continue to respond to the various needs of our clientele i.e. bookers, workshop participants and our members, in an attempt to develop and maintain social interaction during these increasing socially disparate times.





Keisha Grant © Matthew Salmon

KEISHA GRANT
FOUNDER OF KENEISH DANCE

WHERE DO YOU SEE THE FUTURE OF DANCE OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA OR YOUR WORK?

I think there will be a shift from artists feeling the need for creative activism in order to break down barriers to get their work showcased, to a time where artists will have better resources and the access to explore a more ambitious creative possibility. I guess there is a need for both artists of traditional forms from specific regions and languages outside of the UK, just as much as UK born and based dance artists' voices need to be seen and heard, now more than ever. Where you were born influences your expression.



WWW.KENEISHDANCE.COM



© Anastasia Jobson

GEMMA PILGRIM
PROFESSIONAL
DANCER | FREELANCER

WHERE DO YOU SEE THE FUTURE OF DANCE OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA OR YOUR WORK?

Being of Bajan heritage it is and has always been important to me to know about my history and to include my history in my work. It is a vital time for Black dancers as the industry and the world is slowly being awoken by the movement of Black Lives Matter. This is allowing more opportunities for Black dancers to break through to the industry with their natural styles of dance that they grow up with or have been influenced by for example, African, soca and dancehall.



© Nik Pate

OLU ALATISE
-(MISS LULU)
CHOREOGRAPHER |
TEACHER | CREATIVE
DIRECTOR | MENTOR |
TALENT AGENT
MISS LULU CREATES
/ AFROQUEENS / LD
CREATIVES

WHERE DO YOU SEE THE FUTURE OF DANCE OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA OR YOUR WORK?

I see the future of dance of the African Diaspora in the UK progressively changing the way the modern and western world view dance. For a long time, African dance has been 'othered' and now we are seeing the dance of the diaspora on mainstream and commercial platforms. It is a coveted range of forms, which are now enticing and intriguing people to know more and my hope is that these dance forms are put on the same level as ballet and contemporary.

African dance not only connects so many dots within several styles, but you can see the influence it has had for many years on other dance forms. It's time African dance gets the respect, recognition and accolades it deserves, and I think that is starting to happen.



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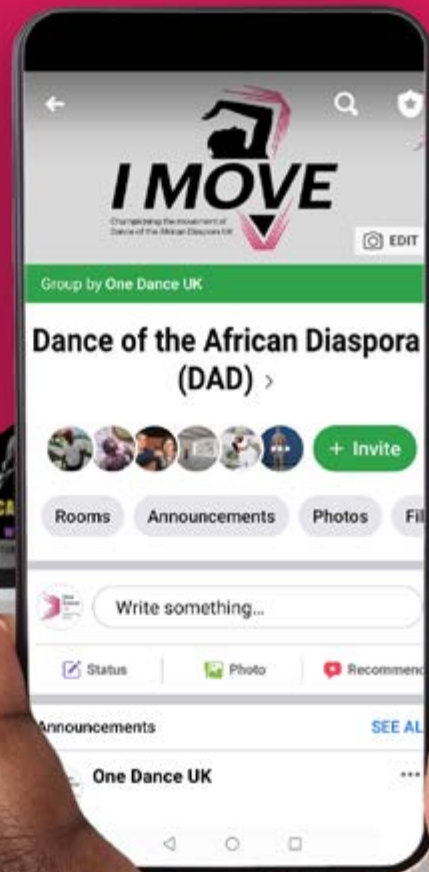
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BY EMILY LABHART
PRODUCER, DANCEXCHANGE

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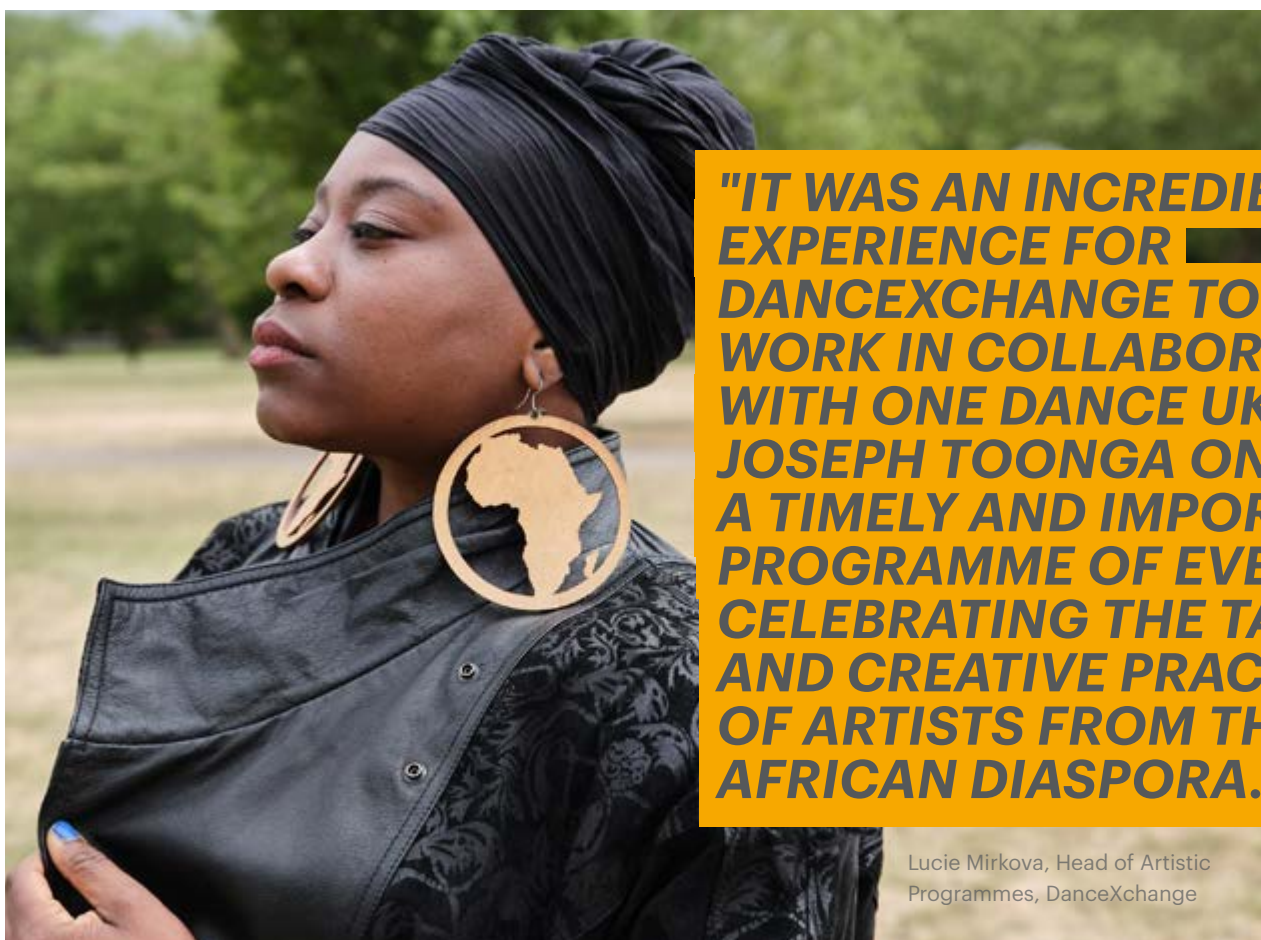
Alleyne Dance © David Levene

DanceXchange is an internationally renowned Birmingham-based dance development organisation. We present and produce UK and international dance with a focus on work that is current, new and choreographically driven, and that is artistically ambitious, engaging and inspiring. DanceXchange is committed to supporting and showcasing high quality dance that resonates with our city's young and diverse audiences.

Like so many organisations across the country and around the world, in March this year we had to suspend live activities and events due to the COVID-19 pandemic, including the renowned Birmingham International Dance Festival (BIDF), which was due to take place in June. This led us to challenge ourselves to find alternative ways to stay connected with all our communities throughout lockdown by working differently and digitally – and became the catalyst for an entirely new digital programme.

As part of this new approach, we launched Dance Insights Online in April 2020 – a programme of performances, discourse events, provocations and artistic inspirations, curated by our 2020 Artists in Residence. Working across a range of digital platforms, this created an invaluable space for the artists and the public to meet, watch, make and discuss great dance. This laid the foundations for Dance Insights Online this Autumn, which celebrated an incredible new line-up of local and international talent.

In October, we were proud to work in collaboration with One Dance UK to celebrate artists working within dance of the African Diaspora (DAD). Here's a glimpse of what we had on offer.



"IT WAS AN INCREDIBLE EXPERIENCE FOR DANCEXCHANGE TO WORK IN COLLABORATION WITH ONE DANCE UK AND JOSEPH TOONGA ON SUCH A TIMELY AND IMPORTANT PROGRAMME OF EVENTS, CELEBRATING THE TALENT AND CREATIVE PRACTICE OF ARTISTS FROM THE AFRICAN DIASPORA."

Lucie Mirkova, Head of Artistic Programmes, DanceXchange

Jade Hackett © Phillip Suddick

Internationally acclaimed artist Joseph Toonga (Artistic Director of Just Us Dance Theatre) presented a series of dance works on screen, showcasing outstanding choreographers Jade Hackett (UK) and Renann Fontoura (Brazil) alongside his own work, followed by a Q&A.

Later in the series, Joseph delivered a bespoke Masterclass specifically for dance artists looking to enhance their creative practice. Through a mix of practical exercises and discussion, this was a professional development opportunity for 20 artists who explored everything from choreographic process, to techniques for working with dancers from different specialisms. To continue the learning, attendees had the chance to apply to take part in our first Remote Residency – a paid opportunity to test ideas and receive support from DanceXchange producers. Check the DanceXchange website for further details.

Finally, we closed this part of the season with a lively panel discussion, *Contemporary vs. Tradition: navigating through contemporary spaces*. Bringing together some of the UK's most exciting talent working within DAD including Alleyne Dance, Dickson Mbi & Alesandra Seutin, this session invited artists to reflect on their experiences of making work that spans indoor and outdoor spaces, connecting

with audiences and navigating perceptions of their practice as Black dance makers. *Contemporary vs. Tradition* was facilitated by ACE dance & music.

This Autumn Series aimed to showcase and create space for DAD artists across the sector and built on our programme strategy for BDF, where the promotion of work by DAD artists is one of our curatorial priorities.

It is important to DanceXchange to represent the breadth of contemporary practices (by 'contemporary', we mean relevant to current trends) and we recognise that we have more to do to platform DAD in our outputs. Birmingham was the birthplace of one of Britain's first African Caribbean dance companies Kokuma Dance Theatre; it's the home of DAD innovators ACE dance & music; and the base for some talented hip hop dance theatre makers.

We want to recognise and build on that foundation by making meaningful partnerships with key voices within DAD, both in our local region and across the UK, to ensure our work remains reflective of our community. Our Dance Insights Online Autumn Series is an exciting step forwards in this regard; we invite you to stay connected with our programmes as we look ahead into 2021 and beyond.

ARTIST IN
FOCUSJUST US
DANCE
THEATRE

Just Us Dance Theatre (JUDT) is a hip hop dance theatre organisation actively supporting early career artists, connecting communities globally and upskilling young performers & creatives. Created in 2007 by Artistic Director Joseph Toonga, JUDT is currently based at Redbridge Drama Centre in East London. JUDT prides itself on creating the opportunities and environment for aspiring hip hop theatre performers to thrive.

Through the artistic vision of Joseph Toonga, JUDT uniquely brings together dancers and creatives from a broad variety of backgrounds including hip hop, contemporary and the African Diaspora and aims to **inspire, nurture & support** by:

- **Creating environments for artists to upskill and fulfil their artistic ambitions**
- **Providing alternative routes into the professional sector**
- **Holding platforms for underrepresented communities**

Recently, JUDT developed a screen adaptation of their acclaimed touring work *Born to Manifest*, and last month Joseph Toonga curated screen dance sessions and a masterclass at DanceXchange's *Insights Online* series.

**JOSEPH TOONGA'S COMMISSIONS INCLUDE**

- Boston Conservatoire of Dance
- Codarts, Rotterdam
- Richard Alston Dance Company
- EDge
- National Youth Ballet/ Bundesjugendballett

OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

- Secret Cinema collaboration for premiere of French film *Les Misérables*
- DanceEast Associate Artist
- *Elephant in the Black Box*, Junior Ballet Madrid
- *East Wall* with Hofesh Shechter
- Best Choreography Award Reverb Dance Festival, New York

FUTURE PROJECTS

- Joseph's next work is the second part of the trilogy of work he is currently making following on from *Born to Manifest: Born to Protest* will be Joseph's new outdoor work which will tour from April – October 2021

"TOONGA CREATES THE KINDS OF ART THAT PUT CHANGE INTO MOTION AND EMPOWERS THE NEXT GENERATION OF DANCERS "

Katie Hagan, Dance Art Journal

ARTIST IN FOCUS

JOSEPH TOONGA | ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

@JTOONGA 

@JOSEPHTOONGACREATES  @JUSTUSDANCETHEATRE 

I am the Artistic Director of Just Us Dance Theatre and Co-Director of Artists 4 Artists. As an independent choreographer I use hip hop to disseminate real life stories and reach audiences to engage with work that challenges racial stigmas and societal stereotypes.

Since 2016 I have worked with producer Emily Crouch and we have developed our careers simultaneously. For me, the important thing about working with a producer is to find someone who is as equally invested as you are, and someone who can bring creative ideas to the table and support with thinking 'outside the box'.



Joseph Toonga © Camilla Greenwell

Creating work for screen is how I continue to develop my personal practice, building new skills and audiences to connect with my work. JUDT recently created a four-part digital series based on my latest theatre work *Born to Manifest*, which

unfortunately had the end of its tour cancelled due to COVID-19.

Between September 2019 and March 2020, we successfully toured the work to 14 different venues across the UK. It stirred up some great conversations so we knew it had a longer life. Developing it for screen seemed the perfect way to keep the work alive before touring it again in 2021.

For me as an artist this move to digital has shown the bigger presenting spectrum that has always been available to us, but for some reason theatre was the dominant performance space. It developed relationships with my partners and collaborators, really emphasising the visceral language of hip hop and how it can clearly convey a narrative.

EMILY CROUCH | PRODUCER

@EMILY4509  

After training at London Contemporary Dance School, I had a successful performing career working with Danish Dance Theatre, National Dance Company Wales and Just Us Dance Theatre (JUDT). After having my first child, my role changed to Rehearsal Director for Joseph and I supported the curation and establishment of his touring activity and programmes run through JUDT.

In 2016 I became core producing support for JUDT and a founding team member of Artists 4 Artists. For the last four years I have worked with The Place, Greenwich Dance, East London Dance and Richard Alston Dance Company. Previous artists include Theo 'Godson' Oloyade, Caramel Soldier, Jorge Crecis, Nadia Gardner and Ricardo Da Silva. I also currently work producing for female hip hop leader Kloe Dean.



Emily Crouch © HazOgraphyUK

Being a freelance producer gives me job satisfaction with work-life balance. Some days I still struggle to find it but being able to bring my children into the creative work environment has benefited their development and enables me to be a working mum.

Shifting work onto screen has meant we can connect with new collaborators such as cinematographers, editors and directors. The preparation for getting the work on screen is the same (funding, scheduling, contracting) but then the rehearsals are usually on a location instead of a studio and the performance is made for the screen.

The essential connection between myself and working with Joseph is the shared ambition to make a social change and impact on people's lives through the work.

SHARING THE RHYTHM

With so much dance content moving online, leaders in the sector are finding new challenges and new opportunities. Mercy Nabirye speaks to Carolyn Lilly of Afro Dance Xplosion, which recently celebrated its 10th year, taking place on digital platforms 23-25 October.

CAROLYN LILLY
FOUNDER AND CEO OF FEEL
THE RHYTHM PRODUCTIONS

WWW.FEELTHERHYTHMPRODUCTIONS.COM 



Melanin Migration Brothers in Arms
© Breathe Visuals Photography

Congratulations on hosting Afro Dance Xplosion 2020, which was such a vibrant event. How did moving the festival onto a digital format change your programming and planning?

Moving Afro Dance Xplosion (ADX) to a digital format changed several things with the planning of the festival. Firstly, we had to work to ensure that we could keep everyone engaged in the festival. This proved to be very interesting as this was the first year we held the event digitally. I have personally attended several festivals that have been moved to a digital platform, and noted that keeping the audience engaged is the key. This was important for both the Showcase and the Master workshops.

Secondly, because of this we shortened the program to ensure that the audience remains engaged and wanting more! If the audience is not engaged they can easily turn their camera off or leave the room. Finally, the budget of the event was adjusted because expenses were reduced, and this was reflected in the price for attendees.

What are some of the unexpected positives that come from a change to digital?

We found there to be several positives. We were not bringing international teachers here to the UK to teach, which is an economic saving. We programmed artists from Africa, the Caribbean, the USA and the UK.

Secondly, because the festival was digital the audiences could be international. By sharing the word on websites and social media the ADX Festival was accessible to anyone who was interested in the festival! We are no longer limited to a city or region for our attendees, and we had a wonderful varied audience from across the globe.



"WHAT MAKES THE ARTS SO EXCITING IS THAT THEY ARE CHANGING ALL THE TIME"

Carolyn Lilly

Carolyn Lilly © Afro Dance Xplosion

Some of the magic of viewing African dance styles can be the shared energy between audience member and artist, where the viewer can see the dancers' relationship between music and movement and their passion and focus. How do you think the move to online affects this?

ADX 2020 *And Still We Dance!* included two Showcases and three live/digital Workshops. Judging from the feedback from the Showcases, the response was overwhelmingly positive. David Blake, recent recipient of a Black British Theatre Award, premiered his new work called *Melanin Migration: Brothers in Arms*, followed by 10 pieces from the last five years of ADX. David's piece was specifically videoed with a digital showcase in mind and was beautifully presented.

The Showcases were followed by a Q&A with a panel of choreographers who had their work presented. Each night the panel was different. The audience were very animated during both the showcases and Q&A and the chat box was filled with comments like «bravo», «spectacular» and «pure magic!» Some of the feedback received on social media included «Just finished watching & listening to 2 enjoyable hours of Afrobeat, Afro Culture and artistic dancing and music. It was pure gold and I loved it!. Feel the Rhythm, yes I did!»

The workshops were also well received, especially from the four young people who had been awarded full scholarships to attend the festival. ADX awarded these to students from IRIE! dance theatre and Artistry Youth Dance. During the two days of workshops they attended classes with Georges Momboye (from Ivory Coast), Cori D Lionne (UK/Cameroon) and 'H' Patten (UK). They were very appreciative, and it reaffirmed my position that young people in dance must be supported!

In 2020, inclusion is at the top of the agenda for many. How do we work together to make sure it stays that way?

2020 has been a very challenging year for so many reasons and I feel that we will be feeling the aftermath of 2020 for several years to come. In past years there are many groups that have not been represented as well as they should have been.

Industry organisations such as One Dance UK need to support as many of these groups as possible. That does not mean only financially, but also promoting activities on social media, on the One Dance UK website etc, as well as assisting with contacts, relationships and providing mentoring. All these things are important. Another possibility is having regular meetings with underrepresented groups to discuss what their needs are by way of support.

What would you like to see for DAD styles in the coming years in the UK and beyond?

The UK is a melting pot and I feel that the styles represented should reflect the populations, which would mean that, in turn, the audiences would become more diverse.

Any last words for the sector and for other leaders in the dance industry?

My only suggestion is that the leaders in the dance sector need to be more flexible and not expect everyone to fit in a certain box. What makes the arts so exciting, especially in the dance sector, is that they are changing all the time and will continue to change. If art stops changing it runs the risk of becoming redundant.

CREATING A DIGITAL CULTURAL COMMUNITY

BY ROSA CISNEROS PhD, (C-DARE)

WWW.CULTUREMOVES.EU 



Rosa Cisneros © Wholodance Project



Rosa Cisneros © Wholodance Project

Dance can be seen as an embodied cultural heritage which makes it useful in studying its diaspora. Through choreography and muscle memory that lives within the body, there are relationships which reflect nationalist histories, stories and pasts, which can be tied to several geopolitical locations. Still and moving imagery has the potential to capture embodied knowledge and histories, and through digital platforms these stories can be retold in innovative ways.

As an artist-researcher at Coventry University's Centre for Dance Research (C-DaRE), Coventry University's Centre for Dance Research, dance and digital technologies are central to my research and practice. At the recent Re:generations international conference, hosted by One Dance UK at The Lowry, Salford, the CultureMoves team held practical and interactive workshops.

We invited delegates to engage with the project's materials, and offered the space to discuss dance, diasporic digital content, the project's digital toolkit and site practice in relation to attendees' own work.

The CultureMoves project was EU-funded and included researchers from C-DaRE, as well as European researchers and developers. The project explored the intersections of dance, technology, site, tourism and the Europeana online library. CultureMoves aimed to demonstrate the value of reimagining the ways in which dance content can be used to encourage dancers and choreographers to develop their creativity. Central to the project was a consideration of how technology can create new forms of engagement with dance content and also spread the embodied knowledge of communities from various backgrounds.

Technology is becoming increasingly central to the artistic and creative conversation, and more recently, due to COVID-19, digital platforms are being used to teach, share, document and partake in dance work and engage with other dancers. The material body and the digital platform can combine to meet in a place where the user can consider archives and the immaterial.

Such tools, like those developed within the CultureMoves project, offer opportunities for artists, dancers and choreographers to reflect on different forms of collaboration and encourage new horizons for their practices through the creating of digital scrapbooks and other types of exhibitions. The digital space has the potential to encourage users to reflect on how we archive, remember the past and engage the live dancing body. Eze-Orji & Nwosu (2016) claim that “the fluidity, flexibility, and permeability of culture, does not allow it to be static” (2016: 2), thus allowing for artistic traditions and practices to cross-fertilise one another. Digital environments can facilitate environments where a user come to know more about themselves, others, different countries and sites, as well as cultural heritage legacies of those sites. Through the unique process of engaging in a hybrid practice that the digital platform facilitates, dancers are able to engage in a form of artistic innovation.

UK-based choreographer Jennifer Essex suggests to “give yourself more time than you think and do lots of lo-fi prototyping”. JiaXuan Hon from Blackwinged Creatives says that time is important and “embodiment is not built into digital technology, but visual gymnastics is. The latter has been experimented with numerous times since film was invented, and the former requires hard work but gives you the opportunity to use dance to push boundaries of tech.” She also says that “AR/VR technologists would be the ones who have more spatial and bodily awareness.” She goes on to say that digital technology within dance can “even out power imbalances”. This is an interesting comment as on another project I was part of, the Horizon 2020 Wholodance, I found that digital platforms and tools could be equalisers and allow for nuanced conversations on appropriation and culture. In summary, working with tech affords a dancer to explore new territory but it need not hinder an embodied experience.

TOP TIPS FOR COMBINING DANCE AND DIGITAL

- Take your time to familiarise yourself with the tech you are planning to use
- Ask yourself i) what do you want to achieve by using technology in your practice or research? ii) who is your audience?
- Can you put together a team of technologists and other artists to support any R&D phases?
- If working with a tech savvy collaborator, try to find a shared language that allows everyone to communicate clearly as the dancer is not there to serve the technology and the technology is not there to serve the dancer
- Share your embodied/dance practice and work with others involved and if possible, teach the technologist a bit of dance
- Don't be afraid to make a mistake and allow the technology to be an extension of the dance and the process
- Remember, technology doesn't replace the body-to-body but can be another friend in the creative process.

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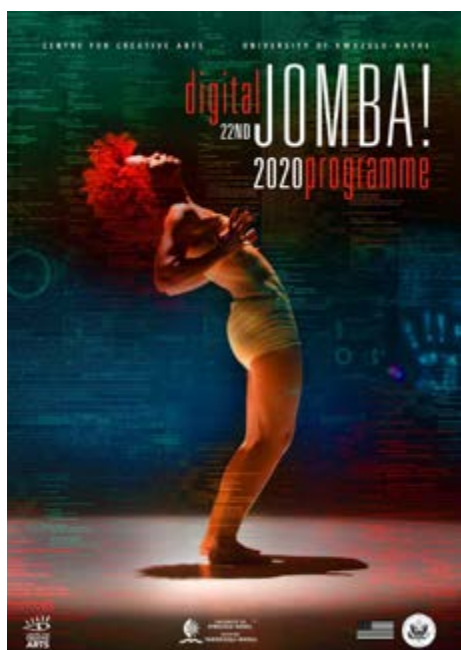
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JOMBA! CONTEMPORARY DANCE EXPERIENCE

AN ANNUAL DOSE OF SEVEN COLOURS

BY THOBI MAPHANGA
*STUDENT FROM UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL, SOUTH AFRICA*



In most South African Black homes, Sundays mean a special serving of seven colours. After church, kitchens bubble with aromas of meat, rice, pumpkin, beetroot, spinach, cabbage, carrot, potato, and salads in the form of beans, coleslaw, and/or potato. You see, Sunday was, and in most homes still is, the day you get a full nutritional feast of soul food. It is the weekly dose of food medicine that nourishes holistically.

The 22nd iteration of the JOMBA! Contemporary Dance Experience came to us via online platforms this year but did not fall short in giving us the nourishment we so desperately needed. As COVID-19 regulations banned us from mingling at the Elizabeth Sneddon Theatre in Durban, we were instead glued to our screens up to three times a day. This dance festival, which I am fortunate to have held in my hometown, is my annual soul feast with a spread consisting of two weeks of non-stop dance to gorge on.

This year the festival broke down into seven platforms, a perfect serving of seven colours that covered all aspects the festival usually brings, and more. The digital format was like a buffet of local and international delights of past, present and future.

"THIS DANCE FESTIVAL IS MY ANNUAL SOUL FEAST"



2013 JOMBA! Indumba © Fana Tshabala.

An exhibition by resident festival photographer Val Adamson memorialised 21 years of JOMBA! Festival favourites such as the *Fringe*. The *On the Edge* platforms offered fresh new digital works, whilst iconic dance veterans shared archival footage of past performances on the Legacy platform. In acknowledgement of the digital norm we must assimilate, two new platforms (*Dance in a Digital Age* and *USA Dance on Screen*) were introduced, and the *Khuluma Writing Residency* provided a well aging blend of international and local writing that documented this moment.

With words of blessing from the Festival Directors, Dr Lliane Loots and Dr Ismail Mahomed, the feasting began with nine commissioned dance films from KwaZulu-Natal that introduced flavours that would resurface later in the festival. Pressing issues of gender-based violence, mental health, spirituality, and companionship in the time of confinement became base flavours highlighted by beauty, hardship, and the connectedness of our pasts and locations.

The dash of nostalgia seeing American friends from Deeply Rooted Dance Theater in collaboration

with South African dancemakers reminded me of the strength we can find in connections. Equal parts of history and herstory brought balance in the phenomenal telling of Gregory Maqoma's and Germaine Acogny's family legacies. A sprinkling of gentleness and vulnerability from Vincent Mantsoe reassured me that we are not done. A generous dollop of Robyn Orlin's ingenuity reminded me of the disposability of life. A little spice from Anita Ratnam and a hint of acidity from Ijodee Dance Company in collaboration with Flatfoot Dance Company. A grounding of self from Musa Hlatshwayo and a whisking of magic by Introdans to finish is just a hint at what was on offer. To pick apart the elements of this feast however would spoil this perfectly balanced meal.

Like any good Sunday serving of seven colours, variety and colour is vital in getting the absolute maximum nutritional value for mind, body, and soul. So, whether baby or matured, local or imported, all flavours are important in making a perfectly fresh feast of festivity and JOMBA! 2020 definitely succeeded in doing just that.

JOMBA! KHULUMA WRITING RESIDENCY

STRETCHING OUR DANCE- WRITING MUSCLES

BY RUTH ASIDI
*GRADUATE, UNIVERSITY OF EAST
LONDON BA (HONS) DANCE*



2009 JOMBA! Theatre Taliipot in Ma Ravan
by Philippe Pelen Baldini. © Sylvia Glasser

In 2010, under the mentorship of veteran South African dance writer and theatre journalist Adrienne Sichel, JOMBA! Khuluma Writing Residency was born. Joining Sichel in 2015, Clare Craighead co-facilitated and later took on hosting and managing duties on behalf of the JOMBA! platform.

Targeting dance students and graduates, especially those from South Africa's University of Kwazulu-Natal Howard College Drama and Performance Studies programme and others abroad, JOMBA! Khuluma Writing Residency aims to provide a platform on which dance writing and journalistic skills can be cultivated within the fast-paced, rigorous context of the JOMBA! festival.

Despite the current global crisis, 2020 has proven to be successful in marking the first digital JOMBA! Contemporary Dance Experience which connected young and emerging creative writers from across the Atlantic Ocean (South Africa, the UK and the USA). Zooming into a series of seminars and critical discussions, the writers observed the live streaming festival whilst tuning into, and out of, their bodily experiences to offer insights, thoughts and responses to a collection of dance films and staged performances.



2010 JOMBA! Lebo Mashile and MIDM in *Threads* © Sylvia Glasser

Accompanying Craighead on the first international group seminar titled *The Mechanics of Reviewing 101*, was 2018 JOMBA! Khuluma co-facilitator and editor Lauren Warnecke from USA's See Chicago Dance alongside supporting dance guests Emily Loar, Surinder Martignetti and Julia Mayer, and See Chicago Dance Fellowship participants. This was followed by a panel discussion on *How else can I use this?*, Associate Professor Dr Raquel Monroe from the USA's Columbia College Chicago joined us with special guests Kerry Reid, Lizzie Leopold, Tara Aisha Willis, Rachel Russell, Sharon Hoyer Tal Rosenberg.

Leading the third seminar, *The Ethics of Reviewing 101*, was UKZN and JOMBA! alumni Dr Sarahleigh Castelyn, now based at the School of Arts and Creative Industries, University of East London (UEL) with UEL participants in the UK. Concluding the residency with *A mini-history of contemporary dance in South Africa* was long-time JOMBA! Khuluma collaborator, Tammy Ballantyne from Ar(t)chive Johannesburg, which is the first and only comprehensive contemporary dance archive of its kind in Africa. Joining Ballantyne from South Africa was UEL, UKZN and WITS participants alongside a handful of guest writers, many of whom have

had a longstanding relationship with the Khuluma residency.

Persevering through frozen screens to glitchy sound systems, thought-provoking discussions emerged as the panellists, hosts and writers grappled with the complexities of 'language-ing' the political dancing body. We looked at the elusive attempt to capture a fleeting, historically loaded dance performance in the fewest words on paper and the stark truth of how limiting translating dance into words is. As UKZN Honours graduate and isiZulu language editor and translator Lisa Goldstone would have us know, not everything can be translated.

A virtual library of PDFs, documents and shared resources revealed the arduous work of those who have gone before, to pave the way for a connective time as this. The Khuluma Writing Residency was a great reminder of the desperate need for a diverse representation of all voices to be kept alive. The need to continue the work of archiving, revisiting and reshaping how language describes our political dancing bodies, perpetually creating space for one more voice in the web of conversation, is as strong as ever.



RESOURCES A CONNECTIO

AND
ONS



NERIAH KUMAH LEGACY GIFT



WWW.ONEDANCEUK.ORG/SUPPORT-US/LEGACIES

Sheba Montserrat is the second recipient of the Neriah Kumah Legacy gift, which was pledged in 2017 by the Kumah family in support of the professional development of artists' careers working within dance of the African Diaspora. Sheba used the funds to benefit from a strategic planning mentorship and dramaturge support from Dr 'Funmi Adewole.

The first recipient of the legacy gift was Sara Dos Santos who in 2016 used the funds to produce and present a deeply moving dance piece at The Place, in response to the issues of human trafficking.

One Dance UK would like to acknowledge this generosity and will continue to support the family to select further recipients of this gift.

On completion of the mentorship here is what Sheba and Dr Adewole had to say about the experience.

SHEBA MONTSERRAT

I would like to give thanks to the Kumah family's legacy fund on behalf of Neriah Kumah and One Dance UK, for supporting the ongoing development of mature performing artists.

My time with 'Funmi has been excellent. Having known me for a good while and witnessed my evolution as an artist. Funmi proposed I add another string to my bow by way of developing a podcast audience, thus delivering my talent as a communicator through a new portal.

Presently I am in negotiation with a radio station in Bristol to produce a 2-hour fortnightly show. My intention is to translate this training and experience into my own podcast. Especially as I love 'Funmi's proposed idea of interviewing everyday people. After all, we all have a story or two to tell.



Sheba Montserrat © Charmaine Mainoo

DR 'FUNMI ADEWOLE

Sheba Montserrat is a longstanding member of the dance community and one of the first cohort of students to gain a formal qualification in Caribbean dance in England. Additionally, she is a poet, comedian, and the producer of Sheba's One Drop Variety Show. The legacy fund provided Sheba with the space to reflect on her varied career and consider new directions using discussions with me and completing questionnaires as tools.

Sheba was able to pinpoint a target audience and we decided that producing podcasts would be a way of using her media talents to extend her reach. Due to COVID-19 her show is now on hold. Not one to give up, she has taken to teaching Caribbean dance online, which gives her the opportunity to build her audiences in new ways. Members of the dance community regularly log on.

It has been a pleasure working with Sheba. I thank the Kumah family for the legacy fund - they have supported a well-respected practitioner with much to offer. They have given me the space to extend my experience as well.

A MESSAGE FROM JANET KUMAH AND FAMILY

I conversed with Sheba several months ago and it was just so warming to hear how her journey has developed - especially during these times. We also watched Sheba's work online and it is glorious. It is wonderful to see her shine and take on the challenges this year has brought, and she has faced it all with such conviction and entrepreneurial spirit

as an inspirational artist.

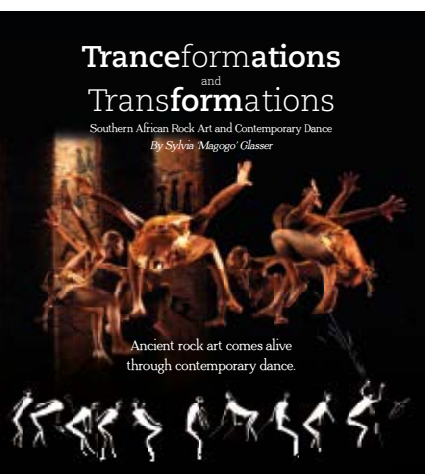
It has been an absolute honour to support Sheba in the very small way that we have. Sheba is a treasure to the artistic community. Her voice and her experience, knowledge and skills need to be platformed and further spread for all the joy, release and connection it gives to so many of us.

Thank you, Sheba, for your journey of art that touches so many people and brings joy, education, enlightenment, and a feeling of being seen and heard to so many. You provide a space which is very necessary, and I look forward to seeing how your beautiful artistic expression continues to shine, nourish, and evolve us all.

With love from us all and on behalf of Neriah's legacy, we thank you!

BOOK
REVIEW

TRANCEFORMATIONS AND TRANSFORMATIONS: SOUTHERN AFRICAN ROCK ART AND CONTEMPORARY DANCE



AUTHOR: SYLVIA 'MAGOGO' GLASSER

PAGES: 192

ISBN: 978-1-928440-32-1 (PBK)

PUBLISHER: STAGING POST

FURTHER MATERIAL INCLUDED: DVD

DATE: 2019

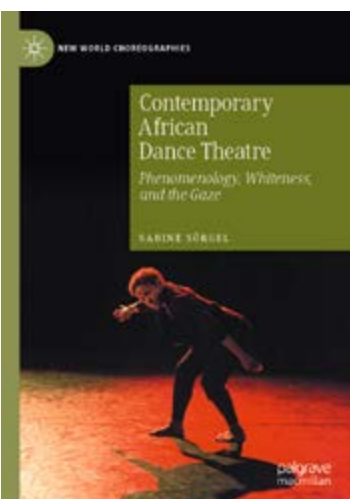
REVIEWER: DR SARAHLEIGH CASTELYN

Sylvia 'Magogo' Glasser is the Grandmother 'Magogo' of Contemporary Dance in South Africa, much like Germaine Acogny is to Contemporary Dance in Senegal. Glasser has shaped the history and future of art form in South Africa and has been a mentor and guide to many South African dancers and choreographers, including Vincent Mantsoe and Gregory Maqoma. She is affectionally called 'Magogo', a term of respect for a wise mature woman in South African culture, by her dancers and those who are involved with dance on the continent and beyond. Her book *Tranceformations and Transformations: Southern African Rock Art and Contemporary Dance* covers her thirty-year journey providing insight into the inter-connected relationship her dance practice has with her anthropological research background. The book is populated with

captivating images, from illustrations of San Rock Art to John Hogg's photographs of documenting performances of 'Tranceformations' across the decades. A great strength of this book, and a further example of Glasser's ethics - and why she is known as 'Magogo' - is the inclusion of the interviews she held with the dancers she has worked with, such as Oscar Buthelezi and Thandi Tshabalala; I wish I could name them all in this review! This book also comes with the valuable addition of a DVD of her choreography 'Tranceformations' performed by Moving into Dance Mophatong in 1991. For those interested in the history of contemporary dance in South Africa, the wonders of San Rock Painting, the key themes that run through South Africa, and the much-needed voices and stories told by South African dancers, this book is a must for your bookshelf.

BOOK
REVIEW

CONTEMPORARY AFRICAN DANCE THEATRE: PHENOMENOLOGY, WHITENESS AND THE GAZE



AUTHOR: SABINE SÖRGE
PAGES: 178
ISBN: 978-3-030-41500-6 (PBK)
PUBLISHER: PALGRAVE MACMILLAN
FURTHER MATERIAL INCLUDED: DVD
DATE: 2020
REVIEWER: DR SARAHLEIGH CASTELYN

Sabine Sörgel's new book, *Contemporary African Dance Theatre: Phenomenology, Whiteness and the Gaze*, is a sensitive and honest account of her inquiry into her relationship with contemporary African dance theatre as a white woman from the Global North. This is a complex and detailed text that is positioned towards more of an academic market, in particular for university students and researchers, however, there is an urgent need for this discussion across the sector by all involved.

Sörgel makes clear that her book is not about the diversity of Africa and the dance practices and cultures from Africa, but rather is far more concerned with how Africa and contemporary African dance theatre is viewed through a White Colonial/Imperialist Gaze (2020: 20) by audiences from the Global North, and how contemporary African dance theatre makers explore this.

She offers detailed analysis of a wide range of works by dance artists across the continent, for example, Gregory Maqoma (South Africa) and Faustin Linyekula (Democratic Republic of Congo). Nevertheless, what does become clear is that the majority of these dance artists transverse the Global South and the Global North, for instance, Germaine Acogny, (Senegal, France, Germany), Nora Chipaumire (Zimbabwe/US) and even Alesandra Seutin (Belgium/UK), thus capturing the history of colonialism's very real effects of the present day and how her viewings of dance works by these artists is too shaped by whiteness and colonisation.

Neither does Sörgel shy away from the debate surrounding a contemporary African dance theatre maker who is white - Robyn Orlin (South African/France/Germany). This is an important book on contemporary African dance theatre and should be required reading for all - audience and makers - particularly in the Global North.

RESOURCES



One Dance UK's Dance of the African Diaspora resources and publications cover issues from artistic to practical, political, theoretical and historical topics, along with influential African dance forms, from jazz, tap to hip hop and more.

PLEASE CONTACT

membership@onedanceuk.org for more information on the resources available at One Dance UK.

VOICING BLACK DANCE: THE BRITISH EXPERIENCE 1930S - 1990S

JEANETTE BAIN AND CAROLENE HINDS



Voicing Black Dance, an overview of the Black dance sector in the UK, has now been made available in PDF format on our online shop or via Amazon

The articles and interviews in this Reader demonstrate that the British context poses unique challenges to the expression of the aesthetics and themes emerging from dance artists within the Diaspora. This collection is by no means exhaustive but has managed to capture some of the 'moments' of Black dance in Britain. It is our hope that it will inspire others to commit pen to paper and tell their story.

It gives an insight into the lives of those artists who dared, against all odds, to dance within an environment that offered very little support. It is about the perseverance, power of conviction and positive attitudes of people determined to share their cultural heritage and to make a real contribution to the British dance sector.

PURCHASE ON AMAZON:

www.bit.ly/VoicingBlackDance1

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