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Dance group from Accrington selected for UK youth dance festival at London's Southbank Centre

A talented dance group from West Accrington has been selected to perform in the UK youth dance festival, U.Dance 2019

DanceSyndrome an inclusive youth dance company from West Accrington will perform at U.Dance 2019. U.Dance is a national youth dance festival presented by One Dance UK, in partnership with the ISTD, which returns to London's South Bank this summer with a line-up of youth dance groups from across the United Kingdom.

Being selected for U.Dance is an exciting opportunity DanceSyndrome who will be performing a piece entitled *Los(T)* choreographed by David Darcy, David Corr, Sophie Tickle, and Jess Reid. A representative from the group comments "At DanceSyndrome we strive to provide opportunities for people with disabilities to not only be included, but to become more visible citizens, have their voices heard on important issues, to follow their dreams and to succeed in their ambitions. Our work inspires and empowers both dancers and audiences to believe that opportunities are endless for people who refuse to be defined by disability. U.Dance has given two of our younger dancers that chance to stand up and be counted. In developing a performance about a subject that they were passionate to explore they have been given the opportunity to have their voices heard and showcase this to a wider audience in a completely inclusive setting where their skills, talents and ideas are truly valued, supported and appreciated!"

DanceSyndrome join an impressive line-up of twenty dance groups, selected from over 290 entrants involving thousands of young people nationwide through a series of 20 regional heats. The groups will perform at Queen Elizabeth Hall, housed within Europe's largest centre for the arts, and take part in activities spanning the South Bank, including National Theatre, Rambert and BFI Southbank.

One Dance UK's Head of Children and Young People, Laura Nicholson, comments:

"We were overwhelmed this year with hundreds of applications from youth dance groups from across the country. The standard was exceptionally high, demonstrating that young people in the UK are passionate about creating and performing groundbreaking and high-quality dance work."

Each year the U.Dance national youth dance festival showcases a selection of the best dance groups from all over the country in a range of performances and gives the opportunity for hundreds of

young people to take part in workshops and masterclasses with dance industry professionals, inspire each other with a love of dance and develop their understanding within the dance sector.

Andrew Hurst, Chief Executive of One Dance UK says:

“The U.Dance national youth dance festival is an important event on the dance calendar we are delighted to be working in partnership with the ISTD to deliver this year’s event. From the regional platforms to the Festival itself, U.Dance engages with more than 2,000 young dancers, encouraging them in the pursuit of excellence in dance and embarking on careers in dance, highlighting one of One Dance UK’s key aspirations – to raise the profile of dance teaching and practice in all its diverse forms.”

- ENDS -

Please follow this link for images

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/14hb7nn3sefaxml/AACwqpRH1cAF2bsl5nCzCJPua?dl=0> for further information please contact Comms@onedanceuk.org or U.Dance Project Manager, Cameron Ball, at One Dance UK, on 020 7713 0730, or U.Dance@onedanceuk.org.

NOTES

About One Dance UK

One Dance UK is the sector support organisation leading the way to a stronger, more vibrant and diverse dance sector. We provide one clear voice to:

- Support all those working in the sector to achieve excellence in dance performance, education and management
- Advocate for the increased profile and importance of dance in all its diverse forms and settings
- Enhance dancers’ health, well-being and performance
- Identify gaps, provide opportunities and improve conditions for dance to be learnt, discussed and seen

We provide membership packages for a range of individuals and organisations to support, advise and connect people across the dance sector.

Our aim is to create a workforce that is well-equipped to secure dance's prominence in the cultural landscape of the future. We do this by providing services, information and opportunities for:

- Dance organisations
- All dance professionals including:
 - Dance artists and choreographers
 - Dance teachers, educators and practitioners
 - Dance managers and producers
 - Dance medicine and science/research professionals
 - All children and young people.

About Southbank Centre

Southbank Centre is the UK’s largest arts centre, occupying a 17 acre site that sits in the midst of London’s most vibrant cultural quarter on the South Bank of the Thames. The site has an extraordinary creative and architectural history stretching back to the 1951 Festival of Britain.

Southbank Centre is home to the Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Purcell Room and Hayward Gallery as well as the National Poetry Library and the Arts Council Collection. Southbank Centre has a number of performance and dance Associate Companies including Forced Entertainment, Shobana Jeyasingh Dance and ZooNation Youth Company and Artist in Residence Deborah Colker.

For further information and to buy tickets for the performances visit www.southbankcentre.co.uk.

About DanceSyndrome

DanceSyndrome provide inclusive dance and dance leadership opportunities. Our model of co-delivery allows dancers with disabilities to co-lead their own workshops and inspire others through performance work. We believe that there is no right or wrong way to move and there is beauty and significance in everyone's movement.

DanceSyndrome was founded by Jen Blackwell who had Down's Syndrome, and her mum Sue Blackwell in 2009 after 10 years of unsuccessfully searching for suitable training to enable Jen to become a community dance leader. Jen's recent quote sums up perfectly what dancing means to DanceSyndrome: "I live for dance, it's my passion and my life. I have a right to a life of my choosing. My future lies in dance. I've always wanted to share my passion for dance with others and to get every-body dancing."