



One Dance UK launches online celebration of youth dance this summer

U.Dance Digital 2020 will be a weekend of streamed dance masterclasses, showcases, careers talks and information sessions for young people, engaging the best dancers and dance leaders in the country to share their skills, all for free.

One Dance UK, the sector support organisation for dance, is moving its celebrated U.Dance National Festival to an online format this year and aims to engage young dancers throughout the country with a wide range of inspiring free content.

Held from 17-19 July 2020 and accessed for free, aspiring dancers can expect professional dance masterclasses in a wide range of styles featuring artists from the UK's leading dance companies, choreography challenges, industry and career information sessions packed with practical advice and tips from leaders in their field, dance showcases and much more. This exciting celebration of youth dance is aimed at dancers aged 11-19 years - up to 25 if the participant has a disability - and their teachers and group leaders.

As the dance industry faces the challenges presented by social distancing and the current lockdown, One Dance UK is continuing its commitment to providing accessible, diverse, high quality dance opportunities for young people from all backgrounds. The U.Dance programme of events is a nationwide initiative that allows thousands of participants across the UK to take part in a celebration of dance by performing at a regional platform in their area. The annual U.Dance programme – under ordinary circumstances - then culminates in the U.Dance National Festival, where up to 800 young people come together to take part in a weekend of performances, workshops and information sessions hosted in a different city each year.

By moving the 2020 festival entirely online, One Dance UK is hoping to reach more young dancers than ever before, with this high profile and exciting event being brought direct to them – all completely free of charge!

Ballet star Carlos Acosta, Director of Birmingham Royal Ballet and Patron of Children and Young People's Dance at One Dance UK, said:

"I have always been an advocate of increasing dance opportunities for young people. U.Dance Digital 2020 is a chance for aspiring dancers from across the country to take part in a national event, learn from the best. and get inspired about the amazing careers in dance that await them."

Andrew Hurst, Chief Executive of One Dance UK remarks that:

"One Dance UK, as the sector support organisation for dance, is committed doing just that at this unprecedented time: supporting the dance sector in its many forms. The U.Dance programme of events, with its thousands of young participants at platforms nationwide, is a huge part of the youth dance network in this country, and has at its heart the aim to be inclusive, accessible and to celebrate achievement and aspiration. It is therefore very exciting that One Dance UK is able to present U.Dance Digital 2020. This event will continue in the tradition of previous U.Dance regional events



and national festivals, all the while being more inclusive and accessible than ever before, bringing high quality dance workshops and sector knowledge direct to young people all over the country. Whilst we are in a very trying period for the arts, it is important to remember that we will rebuild and grow again, and this celebration of dance will inspire and inform our next generation of dancers, dance makers and dance leaders.”

Laura Nicholson, Head of Children and Young People’s Dance at One Dance UK, said:
The U.Dance National Festival is a highlight of the year for many eager young dancers. At this challenging time, it is more important than ever that we recognise the many physical, mental and creative benefits of dance. U.Dance Digital 2020 aims to celebrate the diverse range and quality of dance taking place across the UK and to allow young people to come together to celebrate their passion for dance.

LINKS

To sign up for information about U.Dance Digital 2020, email u.dance@onedanceuk.org.
For more images and information please contact comms@onedanceuk.org

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Note to Editors

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

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