

## Return to Dance Guidance

### Webinar 10: COVID19 vulnerability and equality and diversity

#### - Part 2

#### One Dance UK & NIDMS Expert Panel

20/08/2020

Chair: Erin Sanchez

Panellists: Kimberley Harvey, Ellie Douglas-Allan, Hannah Robertshaw, Mark Smith, Sophie Tickle.

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#### Live Q&A

1. Time Point: 1:13:37

Q. How will the next 3-6 months feel and look for you?

A. [HR] At Yorkshire Dance we will be adopting a test and learn approach. We will continue to learn from every class that is held, and from all of the artists making work. We will be bringing things in slowly, and not adopting a 'one size fits all approach'. We have had to review our participatory work with young people, and for the time being therefore won't yet be returning our 0-4-year olds. Our community work will be a staggered return, and we're still waiting for more of a clear understanding of how work involving theatres and touring might look in terms of returning performance work. Independent artists and freelancers will help to drive this forward just as much as companies and organisations. We will focus on greater communication, networking and openness to adaptation and change. Working with care home partners will need much more consideration before we are able to return to working with vulnerable participants in those settings.

[KH] These next few months will be a process of discovery and building. There will be a lot more preparation needed. We will take the time to consider all of our options, and keep all of our channels for communication as open as possible.

[JJC] It's a big unknown, but as a freelancer I feel alone and isolated, and I will rely on my relationships with organisations and continuing dialogue with places such as Greenwich Festival who have been supporting this project – I'll need that more than ever.

[ST] For us this is an opportunity for us to find out and explore, and looking at how we can work with our partners in different ways. We will look more at using digital media, and looking at alternative ways of working with our partners.

[EDA] Testing and learning, planning and re-planning, and risk assessments. We will need to be super adaptive and responsive.

[MS] Before lockdown I felt very overwhelmed, and then when lockdown happened it let me breathe, and reflect and look back, and also towards the future. This was a pause moment for me. I've been exploring more digital dance which has been completely new to me, so I've been learning to adapt to a new way of working and choreographing. Rehearsing through Zoom for example.

2. Time Point: 1:23:51

Q. How do we regain confidence in vulnerable participants in returning to dance? What exercises/themes can we do/explore in those initial classes? Could you think of one exercise, theme or strategy that you might be using to help your participants, or to help yourselves regain confidence in your dance settings?

A. [ST] Music as a driving or starting point for our pupils. We might base a class around them choosing a piece of music that makes them feel happy, powerful or confident. From that we might look at freestyle exercises or set work.

[EDA] Some of the themes that Kimberly and I have been chatting about include using peoples lock down experiences as material for exploration during our sessions, and sharing stories that are grounded in the present.

[KH] Creating a group identity, finding ways of sharing movement, having a movement conversation. When we are back into the live space, we might also think about how we can bring Zoom into the studio to accommodate those people who aren't able to be and dance with us in person so as that can still happen virtually.

[JJC] Recognising the power of the work that community group leaders do is an important place to start for me. Together I think we can create something online that participants can work on and then we take that to the studio, using that creative process as problem solving together – we will be imagining mass-participation in a really different way.

[HR] I don't think that we should assume a lack of confidence, I think we are being cautious on our participants behalf. I have some concerns regarding themes in dance generally, especially post COVID, but I feel that a lot of youth dance particularly may assume themes around isolation and feeling alone, and I think everything might be a bit heavy, so I wouldn't necessarily start in that place. I'm an advocate for social time before and after classes, where we can do things outside of the dance that can be more about individuals concerns, that then don't need to be brought into the dance space. I would also advocate play, and enjoying being able to take up space again.

[MS] I think we should be open to creativity with no judgement. Using tools that inspire individuals to be creative whether it be language, patterns, shapes, colours, music. We should encourage people to be open and sharing, and embracing dance in a fun way – I think those things might be helpful in gaining confidence.