

# TALKING POINTE



## NUTCRACKER REVIEW

Our Nutcracker season at Bloomsbury Theatre was a resounding success. Two casts of 130 children performed 5 shows over 3 days to a continuously packed house. Students of WLS Dance and YDA were given the opportunity to perform, some for the first time, in front of a large audience and to show off their talent, passion and dedication. Jonathan Gray, the Director and Editor of the Dancing Times gave us the real thumbs-up when he wrote a great review of our Nutcracker. He was impressed with the standard achieved right across the board, in particular with Lily O'Neill's Clara which she performed with a 'more forthright portrayal' making a 'welcome change to a more girlish account of the role'. He also commented on both Katia Abramovich's and Grace Park's eye-catching performances as the Snow Queen and the Sugar Plum Fairy respectively and on all our dancers for their immaculately rehearsed performances. We would like to thank all the teachers and volunteers, as well as the parents for all their time and support that made our Nutcracker such a fabulous spectacle. Only 4 months until we start all over again!



I am delighted to introduce to you our third newsletter and proud of our newly styled Talking Pointe. We hope you like it!

Each time Elizabeth and I prepare a new Newsletter, we realise how much has happened in both schools and for the students over the past few months. Following another successful Nutcracker season, I would like to thank Jonathan Gray for his beautiful and lengthy review and we look forward to welcoming him as one of our celebrity judges at our 3rd Annual Choreography Competition coming up in June. We had a fabulous Intensive Easter Course and will be having an upcoming Summer School including a Q&A session with Christopher Powney (Director of the Royal Ballet School) as well as a WLS Dance scholarship audition day and much more you will read about in this newsletter.

As always we hear of the success of past pupils and we were delighted to hear that WILLIAM BEAGLEY (YDA 2009 - 2012) who went on to join The Royal Ballet Upper School has now secured a professional position with English National Ballet! Also, we are happy to welcome Emma Northmore who joined our ballet staff at WLS Dance.

Anna and I were invited to the Paris Opera Ballet School and were amazed by the high standard of these young children. Isla Ghali and Izzy Taylor (YDA year 10) have been accepted to attend the Paris Summer School.

Congratulations to them both. Elizabeth and I look forward to seeing you at the Choreographic Competition, 28th June at the Bloomsbury Theatre (tickets online from their website).

Raymond Koning, Assistant Artistic Director

One wet Saturday morning back in February, I dragged myself out of bed whilst it was still dark and, armed with my camera and a notebook, I made my way to Danceworks where WLS Dance classes were already well under way. Just a reminder to myself of the passion, discipline and determination of so many young children. But I had a question....Why Do You Like Class?

Elizabeth Wigoder



I love spinning around and skipping, I love ballet.  
Indie, age 3



Because sometimes my teacher is a little bit funny!  
Graziella, age 6



I like tap because I like learning all the tricks, it's quite noisy!  
Hadley, age 8



I like the skipping.  
Anaiah, age 5



I like the colour purple!  
Suhanna, age 6



Shirley Hancock MCSP SRP ONC  
 Physiotherapist 0207 402 7700  
 rehab.han@btinternet.com

# Advice from Shirley.....

**Ever sprained your ankle? You are not alone!**

An ankle sprain is the most common injury and will happen more often than not out of the studio rather than in. Shirley, who has specialist experience in dance injuries and their prevention, has seen many sprains over the years and she has a theory: that dancers are trained to keep their eyes up and so often forget to look where they are walking!

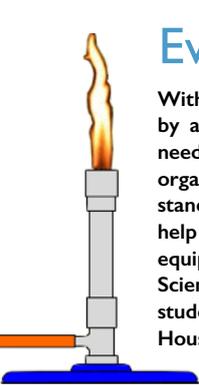
**What is a sprain?**

It's most commonly a tearing of a lateral ligament in the ankle.

**How do you treat it?**

- For the first 48 hrs, elevate it and ice for 10 mins as often as you can.
- If you have bruising, something is torn and will need time to heal. The fibres need to knit back together. Do NOT dance on it – you may find that you are limited in the studio for up to 6 weeks.
- As the calf will probably become tight and shorten, you will need to strengthen the whole foot with intrinsic exercises. The muscles on the outside of the leg will also tighten as it pulls on the foot so seek treatment to loosen the blood flow and stretch it out. Avoid inner movement of the foot.
- If the outside of your foot is painful, the fifth metatarsal could be fractured so get it x-rayed. Wear sensible shoes and seek advice.

**Rest it...Elevate It...Seek Advice...Get Treatment...Strengthen Before Returning To Class**



## Even dancers need bunsen burners

With thanks to Greig's restaurant in Mayfair, a very enjoyable evening was had by all on 16<sup>th</sup> March when 40 parents and staff got together to raise much needed funds to equip the new science room for YDA. The evening was organised by Lucy Turner and Jane Wyllie (who ran the beautiful Nutcracker stand at The Bloomsbury Theatre for us) and £1,367.50 was raised with the help of wonderful raffle prizes drawn by Anna. As well as funding new science equipment, it was a lovely way for the parents to get to know each other. Science experiments will be even more fun and a little less dangerous now the students have the right equipment. No excuses for setting fire to the School House!



## DANCING IN THE RAIN IN PARIS

April showers maybe – but a sunny day with the Ecole du Ballet de l'Opera de Paris.

Elizabeth Platel, the Director of the Opera de Paris Ballet School warmly greeted Anna and Raymond and welcomed them to walk around the school, watching classes and rehearsals throughout the day. In the morning, the timetable is purely academic but come the afternoon, every child in the school is dancing. There are 12 classrooms and 12 studios and boys and girls are taught ballet separately. The system is 6 years of training unless you are exceptionally talented and might finish in 4, and almost all the students will move into the main company.

Having watched the classes, Raymond commented "Like us, the teachers are free to teach what they feel is required for the student rather than follow a set syllabus". The atmosphere was gentle, nurturing and happy. Platell impressively knew all the children's names and clearly both students and staff had respect for each other.

Anna's verdict: "It was a really uplifting experience, especially as it confirmed in my mind and heart that our system of training is the correct one. The teachers who work within WLS Dance and YDA are of such a calibre that we can trust them implicitly to maintain the high standards required. The similar system at the Ecole du Ballet gave me great encouragement".



## THE ENCHANTMENT OF CATS!

On Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March, YDA students were treated to a 'Cats' workshop taught by professional dancer and choreographer Alex Scurr.

After a rigorous warm up involving some serious stretching, the students were introduced to Gillian Lynne's world famous choreography in the opening section of 'The Jellicle Ball' and the fabulously kitsch chorus of 'Mungojerrie and Rumpleteazer.' Combining the original steps with his own choreography, Alex taught four separate sections of dance to two varying age groups. He differentiated between these groups by using more complex and technically difficult steps for the older students. Each age group took on the different sections that were later combined to create a performance piece shown at the end of the day.

The students relished the opportunity to be challenged, to learn and perform some of the most technically difficult musical theatre choreography in the world. Alex was impressed and commented on what exceptionally talented, disciplined and hardworking dancers we have within our school, and the students had a great time learning new and exciting steps to arguably one of the best dance musicals of all time.

Reported by Georgina McDermott

# BACK IN ROME...



This February I returned as a judge for the 9<sup>th</sup> annual dance competition organised by DANZAMORE in a beautiful theatre on the outskirts of Rome.

The competition attracted mostly Italian dancers from all over Italy to compete in different categories: solo, group and choreographic. There were many prizes being awarded and there was a high standard throughout with a large range of talent across all categories. On behalf of the Foundation, we gave away four scholarships to study with us in London.

I took with me some of the pupils of WLS Dance and YDA and I was very proud of their professional approach and success in the competition. It was an exciting day for us all as Iona Green won 2<sup>nd</sup> prize (solo), Giorgia Capogna won 3<sup>rd</sup> prize (solo) as well as 2 scholarships for classes, and all together with Alessio Di Traglia won 3<sup>rd</sup> prize (trio). Well done to all our pupils who represented our schools so well.

Raymond Koning



## GREAT ACHIEVEMENTS OF CURRENT AND PAST STUDENTS

Our YDA graduates Year 11 have completed all their auditions to secure a place at an Upper school and they all came back with fantastic results:

- Conner Jordan-Collins, Jade Longley & Grace Park  
*English National Ballet School*
- James Humpleman - *Laine Theatre Arts*
- Becky Hudson & Elena Trotman  
*Elmhurst School for Dance*
- Erin Crowley - *Royal Conservatoire of Scotland*
- Chloe Fisher - *Tring Park*
- Lara Levy - *Arts Educational School London*
- Moesha Lamptey - *The State Ballet School in Berlin*

- Kyle Little (WLS Dance)
- Royal Ballet School - Year 7 White Lodge
- Ethan Joseph (WLS Dance)
- Arts Educational School London
- Lita Garcia (WLS Dance)
- Central School of Ballet

- Katia Abramovich (YDA Year 10)  
scholarship for the *Yorkshire Ballet Summer School*
- Poppy Wales (YDA Year 9) - Awarded  
*Frank Freeman Scholarship*
- James Beauchamp-White (YDA Year 8)  
- *Wayne Sleep Scholarship* at Dance  
Forward

### Former Students:

- Yasmine Naghdi - Will be dancing in September her Principal role debut as "Juliet" in Sir Kenneth MacMillan's full-length ballet of Romeo and Juliet
- Curtis Angus - Ensemble Lion King
- Harry Francis - Mungojerrie in the musical Cats

## Congratulations to you all!

More about students achievements on our website:  
[www.westlondonschoolofdance.co.uk](http://www.westlondonschoolofdance.co.uk)

## BEGINNERS BALLET FOR TEENAGERS BOOK THROUGH WLS Dance

I caught up with Jon Atwood at Danceworks for a brief chat before he covered Anna's ballet class.

Jon, born in Detroit, was an active member of his school choir. He went on to University to study Linguistics! One day, a friend of his suggested he came to a jazz class and Jon found his passion. He began evening classes and decided to change his career plan. Winning scholarships, he transferred to BFA Dance Performance course, becoming Dance Student of the Year. He met an inspirational dancer called Jordeen Ericson who was with the Pittsburg Ballet. She believed there was no difference between class and the stage and taught Jon the art of performance. She taught him the focus of performance and a sense of musicality.

After graduating, Jon joined the Detroit Dance Collective. He began collegiate teaching, which he found he enjoyed enormously working with talented young students. With a desire to extend his knowledge; he applied to Roehampton in the UK to do a post grad Diploma in Ballet Studies.

Jon met Anna on his first week at Danceworks. I asked him how he enjoyed our classes here. 'The biggest difference is in the size of studio; you can't travel as much. Moving 30 feet has a different sense of energy'. That is true but Jon was hooked and I see Jon in Anna's 1pm class most days, and he is full of energy and still manages to travel across the studio, almost as far as the reception desk!

I asked Jon how he approaches teaching: 'I never plan a class. I lead exercises into a direction of a particular focus of technique, a coupe de pied, developpe or quality, and the focus will sharpen a bit.' Clearly an inspirational teacher himself!

Jon is teaching 14-18 yr olds at Danceworks 4.30-6pm Monday WLS Dance.



## INTENSIVE EASTER COURSE

Our Easter Course attracted a large group of creative, eager and hardworking students. Each day they arrived to study floor barre, aerobic body conditioning, ballet class, La Fille Mal Gardee excerpts in repertoire and choreography. It was a thoroughly happy and productive three days, and we look forward to meeting our Summer School students in July.

Josephine Holling,  
Classical Ballet Teacher  
(YDA & WLS Dance)

Taking part in the Easter course was an amazing experience! It was an honour to be in a place with talented dancers and teachers who love dance as much as I do!

I enjoyed the course and would love to do it again. I particularly appreciated being able to learn variations from different ballets and being taught by so many teachers. I loved the WLS Dance Easter course and would encourage anyone with a love of dance to try it out!

Ella Ingle (12) WLS Dance



## WLS Dance Scholarship Auditions

Earlier this month, I had the joy of watching the scholarship audition for WLS Dance students. With some trepidation, the class began with Anna and Raymond setting the pace. The students, varying in age from 8-15yrs old rose to the occasion, relaxed into the exercises and I was taken by the professionalism, the musicality and artistry of every pupil there. The class wasn't structured in the usual way. After a short warm up routine, students had to do jumps, dancing routines across the diagonal of the room as well as improvisations to varied music styles, incorporating a real awareness of space and spirit.

As a result, 12 new scholarships were offered, some for one class, some for two, annually. I hope the children enjoyed the class as much as I did.

The scholarships give some students the opportunity to take classes to improve their technique and dedication. To others, this is a first introduction to dance and could be the beginning of a future dancer's career, an opportunity that would otherwise have been denied to them.

Elizabeth Wigoder

# THE SHEPHERD'S BUSH VILLAGE HALL FOR HIRE



**Bulwer Street, London W12 8AP**

Available to rent for meetings, parties, children's parties, exercise classes, dance and community use and with disabled access. Conference carpeting available.

The main hall measures 16x11.25m with separate kitchen facilities.

Mirrors, Ballet Barres and CD system Located between Shepherd's Bush Green and Westfield with easy access to public transport. For further information on hiring the Village Hall, please contact: villagehallw12@gmail.com or speak to Jackie on 07954 141607 (for Village Hall bookings only).

## SOCIAL MEDIA



[www.westlondonschoolofdance.co.uk](http://www.westlondonschoolofdance.co.uk)  
[www.youngdancersacademy.com](http://www.youngdancersacademy.com)



Young Dancers Academy and West London School of Dance

## DATES FOR THE DIARY...

**Nutcracker Audition** WLS Dance & YDA  
Thursday 11 June &  
Sunday 14 June

**Prize Giving** YDA  
Friday 26 June

**France School trip** YDA  
Tuesday 30 June - Friday 3 July

**Summer School 2015**  
WLS Dance & YDA

Senior (age 13-16) 22 - 26 July  
Junior (age 8-12) 27 - 31 July

**Back-To-School Ballet Classes**  
Monday 31 Aug. - Friday 4 Sept.  
Monday 7 - Friday 11 Sept.  
Junior Boys & Girls (age 10 - 12)  
4:30 PM - 6:00 PM  
Senior Boys & Girls (age 13 - 16)  
6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

**Carol Concert** YDA  
Friday 4 December

**Nutcracker Performances**  
11 - 13 December

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# THE BUSY VILLAGE HALL IMPRESSES!

The Village Hall is not only a hive of activity for the WLS Dance and YDA, but has attracted some seriously prestigious organisations. Of course, with the state of the art Harlequin sprung floor and ballet barres, it is an obvious candidate for the ballet companies and schools who make great use of these facilities. Over this past year, as well as all our regulars, the English National Ballet Learning Programme rehearsed The Big Dance and took over the hall for the whole February half term, the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland used the Hall for their auditions and on 7th May, we became the local Polling Station. In the summer, we have the Queensland Ballet coming to rehearse, all the way from Australia.

So many people benefit from The Village Hall, from martial arts, ballet, singing classes, summer schools and of course, it is a great space to party with it's own kitchen and outdoor terrace.



Everybody Ballet was founded by Isabel McMeekan, a former ballerina with The Royal Ballet. McMeekan has developed a set of classes that takes the best aspects of classical ballet and makes it accessible for everyone. Her classes are friendly, un intimidating, holistic and fun.

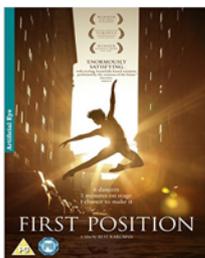


## RECOMMENDED.....



### NUREYEV & FRIENDS DVD

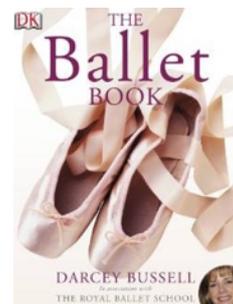
Rudolf Nureyev was one of the most celebrated dancers of all time. This is a DVD for anyone who enjoys watching ballet. It's a tribute by many of the dancers from the world's finest ballet companies with performances from award-winning principal dancers who have been inspired by him. A great one to watch to pick up technique tips!



### FIRST POSITION DVD

An uplifting documentary following the lives of aspiring young dancers competing for a handful of scholarships. We follow their practice, their lives, the exhaustion and passion as they enter the competitions. After watching the DVD, you can even catch up on their lives on YouTube.

### The Ballet Book by Darcey Bussell



And from our Honorary Patron Darcey Bussell, one of her first books aimed at young ballet dancers: Perfect your port de bras, pas de deux and learn how to dance adagio and allegro. Find out the best way to look

after your ballet shoes and make sure your make up is just right for your first night on stage. Contains everything you need to know to become a ballet dancer, from the best ballet dancer in the business, Darcey Bussell.

## SUMMER SCHOOL

Spending a week at our Summer School is a fantastic way to discover how to study dance with different teachers and to meet new friends who love dance as much as you do. Our popular Summer School provides an opportunity to learn more about classical ballet, repertoire and, for the boys 'virtuosity'. You will be taught by highly experienced and qualified dance teachers and the classes will be accompanied with live music by our talented pianists. On the final day, parents, friends and dance teachers are invited to come and watch you performing. The Senior Summer School are in for a real treat with a guest appearance from Christopher Powney, Director of The Royal Ballet School, who will do a Q&A Session. The Junior Summer School have a guest appearance from Ben Tribe, a Ballet Tutor from Bird College. He will be teaching jazz and musical theatre.

## 3rd CHOREOGRAPHY COMPETITION 2015

We are very happy to announce that our 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Choreography Competition will be held this year on Sunday 28th June at the BLOOMSBURY THEATRE. The competition is open for students of WLS Dance and YDA from age 11 (scholastic year 7) to 17 years inclusive. The finals will take place at 6:30pm that evening with a Gala performance by guest artists and some of our younger students. Many prizes to be won and all participants will receive a certificate. No experience needed, just a love of dance.

**DONATE NOW** Please help more young dancers pursue their passion and fulfil their dreams. The Du Boisson Dance Foundation's mission is to help those in need of financial support to pay for ballet lessons, fees, physio, kit etc. Changing lives - step by step. All support greatly appreciated.

There are many different ways to donate:

Bank Transfer: Barclays Bank Sort Code: 20-74-63

Account No: 30824941 OR

Cheque payable to The Du Boisson Dance Foundation

Send to: The Du Boisson Studios, 25 Bulwer Street, London W12 8AR

email: [development@duboissondance.org](mailto:development@duboissondance.org)

**JustGiving™**

Donate now