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JOHN TRAVIS
Chief Executive BBO

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From the President – Dame Beryl Grey DBE

“I would like to extend my thanks to all dance teachers who work so hard bringing something of true value into so many lives.”

“Change is inevitable and must be embraced; but not without remembering one’s origins and the very foundations upon which one’s philosophies have been built. The BBO has celebrated its past and the Espinosa family’s unique contribution to dance across three centuries. Thankfully, it has always had a firm grip on its future too. Over the past year, the BBO has faced more transition and change than ever before and it is so reassuring, as President, to witness the ambition and conviction with which it is developing and securing its future for the next 85 years and beyond.

Dance has so much to offer and teachers today are more important than ever to society. Dance teaching is an art form and carries with it tremendous responsibility. I would like to extend my thanks to all dance teachers who work so hard bringing something of true value into so many lives.

Having been closely associated with the BBO for many years, I am continually impressed with the quality of its work and greatly admire the principles upon which it is based. I am enjoying helping to shape the future of this inspiring organisation which plays a pivotal role in the dance world, both in the UK and internationally.

“Long may the BBO thrive and long may it inspire generations of dancers and their teachers.”
The past year has been one of great change in the world of the BBO, as we bade farewell to Woolborough House and moved the Organization to its temporary Headquarters in Hammersmith. As we continue the search for larger premises in central London, which will allow us to expand our programmes and realise our vision for the future, the innate strength and ambition at the core of the Organization have never been more apparent. The BBO is entering a new era in its history and we are primed for the challenges ahead.

Alongside our ongoing search for a new home, which we hope will be concluded in time for our 85th Anniversary in 2015, the BBO is firmly focused on strengthening communication with its members and updating its brand, to ensure that it is providing the most relevant training in the most accessible ways.

Our proposed rebrand will place our vision for development at the heart of every facet of our business, offering the fresh, bold identity we need to support our ambitious expansion plans. The rebrand, which we aim to launch in early 2015, will be reflected in a new logo and revised digital strategy, comprising an updated website and more prominent social media presence. At the BBO, we pride ourselves on our commitment to reaching out to young people through dance and it is imperative that we establish a more robust digital platform from which to reach further into communities.

An integral part of the rebrand will also involve reviewing our syllabi to ensure they retain their reputation for artistic quality, whilst being informative, up to date with current practice and user-friendly.

Beginning with the ballet, then moving onto modern and tap, we are undertaking a detailed consultation process involving industry experts, with careful consideration being given to the feedback provided by our members.

The idea is not to completely overhaul our existing syllabi, but to build upon the success of the current work and ensure that our syllabi are available through a wider range of media, including via the website. Teachers can be assured that the Organization will provide all the support necessary for teachers to learn the new or reviewed work.

In addition to strengthening our presence in the UK, we are also focused on developing our infrastructure overseas. Earlier this year, following the reorganisation of our Australian and New Zealand branches, BBO Australasia was born. This had been under review for some time and I am delighted that it has now come to fruition. I am very grateful to all our teachers and examiners from both countries for their support in this venture, and particularly, to Liz Derby, for heading up BBO’s Australasian operations, supported in New Zealand by Ann Judson and Heather Brunsdon.

I would also like to pay tribute to Prue Gooch for the many years of hard work she devoted to raising the standards of BBO New Zealand. Her passion for dance and knowledge of the ballet syllabus in particular, was second to none. On behalf of the New Zealand Teachers and the entire Organization, I would like to say a very special thank you to Prue, who recently took the decision to stand down from her position with the BBO.
I had the pleasure of visiting Australia and New Zealand again this year, (with Simon Horrill and Damien Delaney), and judging by the success of Dance Days and the various BBO events we attended, BBO Australasia is already reaching new audiences. We look forward to further cementing the BBO’s reputation in the Southern Hemisphere as we explore the possibilities of extending our presence beyond the shore to countries such as Singapore.

Back on home ground, I am delighted with the success of our events this year, which have attracted record numbers of pupils and teachers. I am particularly grateful to Robert Parker at the Elmhurst School for Dance, for his ongoing support of Dance Days, and to former BBO Scholars, Brandon Lawrence and Max Maslen, for performing at the event, making it such a memorable occasion. We were also very pleased to host our annual Teaching Qualifications Awards ceremony at Sadler’s Wells this year, with special guest, Mark Baldwin – Artistic Director of Rambert.

I look forward to working with our new trustees whose knowledge will guide us at such an important time in our development. I would also like to acknowledge the enormous ongoing support that I receive from the chairman of the trustees, Nicholas Espinosa.

The BBO was deeply saddened to hear of the passing of two prominent figures from the dance profession this year; Gailene Stock CBE AM (1946-2014) and David Wall CBE (1946-2013). Our thoughts are with their families at this time.

Gailene, in particular, was a supporter of the BBO training and its teachers. Since 1999, when she took up her directorship of the Royal Ballet School, many of the students trained by the BBO came under her care. Gailene presented the BBO’s graduating teachers with their diplomas at the Royal Ballet Upper School in 2007, where she spoke so encouragingly; offering wise advice whilst also reminding them of their responsibilities. On a personal note, I often met up with Gailene and her husband, Gary, as they were residents of Barnes.

I also have such fond memories of partnering Gailene at the Royal Ballet School during our student days. She was always so beautifully dressed and had such a charming manner and was always keen to hear news about the BBO. Her enthusiasm and total dedication to the school and its students will be sorely missed.

I would like to congratulate all our students, scholars and teachers on their achievements this year and to thank our loyal members for their valuable contributions and feedback.

With firm roots in the dance profession and an instinct to innovate, the BBO continues to earn its place among the very best dance training providers in the country.

The future is bright, and together, we will embark upon this next stage of the BBO’s inspiring journey.
The confidence with which the BBO strides into its 85th anniversary year is testament to its secure vision, lasting ambition and unwavering strength and conviction.

Since the sale of Woolborough House, its long-held home in Barnes, the Organization has undertaken a wide programme of change and review in order to realise its ambitious development plans. Alongside the significant partnership of John Travis and Robin Bloor (Joint CEOs), the BBO’s committed Board of Trustees led by Nicholas Espinosa, world-class faculty and dedicated administration team, work tirelessly towards a set of common goals; to ensure that the BBO reaches out to more aspiring young dancers, maintains the renowned quality of its training and opens the door even wider to anyone seeking the enjoyment and fulfilment of dance.

Here, The Dancer, meets three new Trustees that will contribute hugely to this new and exciting chapter of development at the BBO...

Dame Sally Powell DBE

Originally trained as a dancer, Dame Sally studied at the Royal Ballet School for eight years before graduating into the Sadler’s Wells Royal Ballet. Sally subsequently gained an honours degree, qualified as a lawyer and currently practises as a solicitor. Since 1986, Sally has been a Councillor for the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham and was appointed a Dame in 2001 in recognition of her public service. She received the New Statesman Upstart Award in 2002, Best Elected Advocate for Social Enterprise and in 2008, the Local Government Personality of the Year award at the Women in Public Life Awards. Sally brings with her extensive knowledge of the dance world and of the responsibilities and governance issues relating to the role of trustees.

Nigel Copeland FCA

As a qualified chartered accountant, Nigel brings a wide variety of skills and expertise to the BBO boardroom. For four years, Nigel was Director of Finance and Resources at the Arts Council England. He then became Director of Finance at the Royal Ballet School where he managed the areas of finance, IT planning, personnel, legal, secretarial and office services. He was responsible for the financial control of the £40 million fund for building a new upper school, adjoining the Royal Opera House and the redevelopment of the lower school in Richmond Park. Nigel brings an extensive knowledge of the charity sector to his role as a Trustee. His advice in helping the BBO to find a suitable property as its new headquarters will be of enormous benefit to the Organization.

Laura Hartong

Having trained at Elmhurst Ballet School under Bridget Espinosa from 1966 to 1975, Laura experienced, first-hand, the artistic prominence of the Espinosa family. Throughout the next 10 years, Laura relished her career working in music, dance, theatre and television, most notably, her four-year tenure in the BBC’s The Onedin Line as Charlotte Onedin. Latterly, Laura gained an International Communications Diploma from the University of Illinois which led to a successful marketing career in the IT and mobile communications sectors. For the past 15 years, Laura has specialised in international marketing and business development for US independent software companies, taking new technologies to market in the Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA) regions. She currently runs western EMEA marketing for the software arm of Seagate Inc. In addition to her dance knowledge, Laura brings a wealth of skills to the BBO across the areas of marketing, budget-planning and management.
Discovering Dance at BBO Dance Days 2014

Dance Days is a landmark event in the BBO calendar and, this year, attracted record numbers of young dancers and teachers, from every corner of the UK. From 15th to 17th April 2014, 200 dancers and over 60 teachers made their way to the Elmhurst School for Dance in Birmingham to receive expert tuition from the BBO’s first class faculty.
Discovering Dance at BBO Dance Days 2014
Participants were invited to attend classes in ballet, tap, jazz, singing and drama and were also offered the opportunity to perform in the Elmhurst theatre in front of their families, friends and distinguished guests from the dance world. Guests included former BBO Scholars, Brandon Lawrence and Max Maslen, both of whom now dance with the Birmingham Royal Ballet, and Robert Parker, Artistic Director at Elmhurst, who presented the 2014 Dance Days awards.

Following an exhilarating programme of classes and events, all participants were treated to unforgettable solo performances by special guests, Max Maslen and Brandon Lawrence. Max performed a solo from Prince of the Pagodas, choreographed by David Bintley and Brandon danced a solo from Elite Syncopations, choreographed by Kenneth MacMillan. Both performances were accompanied by Stephen Lade.

This year, the BBO also arranged for its students and teachers to attend the critically acclaimed production of West Side Story at the New Alexandra theatre in Birmingham.

Dance Days 2014 saw the launch of the BBO’s Discover Dance initiative; an inspiring new programme aimed at children aged 7 to 9 years. On 16th April, 25 young people were welcomed to Elmhurst and given the rare opportunity to dance at one of the country’s top vocational dance schools. The children relished the opportunity to watch the older dance students at work, whilst their parents thoroughly enjoyed the chance to tour the wonderful facilities and watch their children’s classes.

Opening doors to promote the enjoyment of dance among children and young people is at the heart of the BBO’s ethos and, following its success this year, Discover Dance will play a vital role in the future of the Dance Days programme.

In addition to opening up the world of dance to thousands of aspiring young dancers over the years, an equally essential element of the BBO Dance Days programme is the ongoing professional development of its teachers. As such, teachers were offered a wide range of development opportunities, combining observation sessions, practical classes and syllabus reviews.

This year saw our formidable faculty joined by some exciting new teachers, who introduced many students to their first singing and drama experiences. The students gained so much from the faculty’s inspiration and expertise and the BBO would like to sincerely thank: Lewis Barfoot, Sam Cable, Deborah Clark, Damien Delaney, Simon Horrill, Gillian Hurst, Brenda Last, David Needham, Heather Roberts, as well as first class musicians, Stefano Curina, Stephen Lade, and Lee Shiel.

Now in its 15th year, Dance Days continues to go from strength to strength and, as the BBO strides ahead with its ambitious development plans, the future of this prestigious event is a truly exciting one.

Dance Days 2015
Don’t miss out on your chance to attend BBO Dance Days 2015 next April. Watch out for more information on early booking for next year’s event from the BBO Communications Team.
All awards were presented by Robert Parker, Artistic Director of the Elmhurst School for Dance and carry a free place to attend Dance Days 2015.

**The Hilda Tappenden Cup**
Lizzi Brooks (teacher, June Pughe)
Awarded for classical ballet artistry & technique.

**The Incentive Cup**
Sam Castle (teacher, Josephine Johnston)
Awarded to the most promising young dancer.

**The Espinosa Cup**
Fern Kershaw (teacher, June Pughe)
Awarded for ballet & musical theatre and all round performance.

**The Ruth Berney Cup**
Adele Crisp (teacher, Elaine Ferry)
Awarded for strong technique.

**The Maud Anderton Cup**
Rebecca Chester (teachers, Mavis Berry & Helen Allen)
Awarded to a student of particular talent.

**The Peggy Wilson Cup**
Olivia Caplin (teacher, Sheila Cross)
Awarded to a student of particular talent.

**The Margaret Whitton Memorial Trophy**
Laura Cutlan (teacher, Ann Holland)
Awarded for artistry, musicality & performance.

In addition to the above trophy winners, free places for Dance Days 2015 were also awarded to the following pupils who earned special recognition for their hard work at Dance Days 2014:

- **Jennifer Beattie** (teacher, Marian Lane)
- **Joe Dearden** (teacher, Alison Moore)
- **Nicholas Cain** (teacher, Stephanie Clements)
Is Competitiveness Fashionable?

Brenda Last was one of the most versatile dancers of her generation, and today, is one of this country’s most respected dance practitioners. Here, she shares with The Dancer, her views on the nature of competition and the valuable lessons it teaches us...

“Some say competitiveness is ‘non-PC,’ but in my experience, in life as in the dance profession, it is a valuable part of one’s development.

My teacher, Biddy Pinchard, who had worked with Judith Espinosa, was not frightened of presenting her students in public alongside those of other schools. As well as examinations, we were entered into competitions in the North and Southeast of London and in Kent. There were many different dance genres to compete in besides Classical Ballet. We enjoyed performing Classical Greek, Modern, National, Demi-Character, Tap and Song and Dance solos, duets, trios and in groups.

These events gave us the confidence to perform in public as well as a good idea of where we stood in relation to other schools and pupils. In some of the competitions there were bursaries to be won which would help to finance further training.

The origins of the All England Dance Competition go back to 1919 when Mrs D Claremont, the organiser for the ‘Sunshine Homes’ of the Royal National Institute for the Blind, and Philip Richardson, founder and editor of Dancing Times, established ‘Sunshine Matinees’ in aid of the Sunshine Homes. Then Miss Cone, an examiner for the Royal Academy of Dancing and later, founder of the Arts Educational Schools, suggested that the standards of training in dance schools could be assessed and might well be improved by a big nationwide competition, with the proceeds going to the Sunshine Homes for Blind Babies and the Greater London Fund for the Blind. This is the competition in which I won my very first medal – for Tap. Eventually, it had to close because of the escalating costs of travel and venues. However, in 1983, the All England Dance Competition was back in business through the determination of two wonderfully generous people; Joanne Marsden-Blackwell and Malcolm Hickling, who are sadly no longer with us. Dame Beryl Grey is our President and I am very proud and pleased to be a Vice-President, along with BBO Patron, Wayne Sleep.

Another important and prestigious event is the Adeline Genée Competition, held annually by the RAD. I was the gold medal winner in 1955, which gave me a place at the Royal Ballet School. It was held at the Criterion Theatre in Piccadilly and was a great shop window for up and coming young dancers.

“Some say it’s ‘non-PC’ but, in my experience, competition is a valuable part of one’s development.”
After the competition, I was approached to join a small dance company appearing in the Edinburgh Festival. It was called West Country Ballet, run by Frances Crossley and where I met the choreographer Elizabeth West and dancer/choreographer Peter Darrell. It was my introduction into the big professional world of dance. After my year at the Royal Ballet School I had a variety of freelance engagements until, in 1957 Elizabeth West and Peter Darrell asked me to join a new company which they had started in Bristol called Western Theatre Ballet. I stayed with them until I joined the Royal Ballet in 1963. Western Theatre Ballet was then invited to move to Glasgow and eventually became the Scottish Ballet with Peter Darrell as its famous Director and Choreographer.

A recent addition to competitions in the UK is the Molly Lake Award for which I am Artistic Director. Molly Lake studied ballet in Paris in the early 1920s where she met Anna Pavlova who invited her to join her company. She also worked with Tamara Karsavina and Marie Rambert and taught at Ninette de Valois’ Academy of Choreographic Art, the precursor to the Royal Ballet School. Molly and her husband, Travis Kemp, performed with the Markova/Dolin Company and then formed their own small group, which toured during the war entertaining the troops and eventually becoming the Continental Ballet. Dame Gillian Lynne was a member of the company early in her career. In 1983, Travis became chairman of the newly reinstated All England Dance Competition, which was where I met him. When he died he left a substantial sum to set up and run a biennial dance competition in Molly’s name.

The candidates are seen in a free class and perform a solo of their choice, but not from the classics. The object is to provide help with the training of the next generation of young dancers. Recipients of the Award have, so far, gone on to become members of the Royal Ballet, Birmingham Royal Ballet, English National Ballet and the Northern and Scottish Ballet companies. One winner, Drew McOnie, has also just started his own company.

As well as the competitions I’ve mentioned, there are many Easter and Summer courses, which give awards in the form of free entry in the following year and some give funds for further training. Some other Dance Societies also have their own internal competitions with awards and bursaries. The judges for these competitions are usually ex-professional dancers or professional teachers of repute.

So, competition – not fashionable? I would argue that it is part of an essential learning curve. Not to win or be placed in a competition is a form of rejection and that is something that every dancer has to learn to cope with. Parents too have the opportunity to help their children to live with and learn from their disappointments.

Taking part in competitions is vital for anyone with a serious interest in dance performance. It provides an invaluable opportunity to get accustomed to performing in public, to communicate with an audience without any prior rehearsal or placing on stage and to ‘just get on with it’ as so often happens in the theatre. It also shows you where you stand in relation to others of the same age and provides an ideal opportunity for members of the profession to see your work and potential for the future.”

“Taking part in competitions is vital for anyone with a serious interest in dance performance.”
The All England Dance Competition, in aid of the Sunshine Homes for Blind Babies, was, for several years, produced by Eddie Kelland-Espinosa, former Chairman of the BBO. Current President of the BBO, Dame Beryl Grey, was the President of the All England Dance Competition and danced herself in many of the gala matinee performances.

The archives of the BBO hold three personal letters from the 1960s and early 1970s, written by Dame Beryl to Eddie Kelland-Espinosa, thanking him for his work in producing the gala matinees.

Mayfair, London
16th July 1965

“I am writing to tell you how deeply grateful I am for all you did for the performance, and I realise that it was a great deal of work – I shall not forget your quiet composure. Everyone has commented on your remarkable handling of the presentation of the show and the incredibly smooth, professional way in which you dealt with both our Babies and the amateur groups. It would not be possible without you and I do hope you know I appreciate the great success you made of the whole show.”

Hotel Quirinal, Johannesburg

“I want you to know just how greatly I appreciate all that you have done – without you it just could not have happened.”

Personal letters, courtesy of the BBO Archives, from Dame Beryl to Eddie Kelland-Espinosa, thanking him for his considerable contribution to the success of the All England Dance competition.
THE MOLLY LAKE AWARD 2014

THE TRUSTEES OF THE MOLLY LAKE AWARD FUND ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THAT A NINTH AWARD WILL BE MADE IN 2014

• The award is to be made to the best British Young Dancer of the Year

• Dancers will not be judged on technique alone but on the ability to use that technique to create and transmit emotion.

• All young Dancers between the ages of 14 and 16 yrs inclusive at the 30th September 2014 are eligible to take part.

• The Award of £2,000 will be paid to the winner towards further dance training and expenses at the discretion of the trustees.

• Date: 26 October 2014

• Venue: Northern Ballet
  Quarry Hill
  Leeds LS2 7PA

For further details and application form:
(Please enclose S.A.E.)
The Molly Lake Award
All England Dance
PO Box 518
Torquay
TQ1 9EN
(www.all-england-dance.org.uk)

2012 MOLLY LAKE AWARD WINNER:
Isabella Swietlicki
(Ballet West)
# 2014 New BBO Scholars – South

## Senior Ballet

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lizzie Brooks</th>
<th>Allesley School of Dance</th>
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<tr>
<td>Catherine Briggs</td>
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<td>Shauna Hall</td>
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<td>Amelia Ward</td>
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<td>Danielle Willetts</td>
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## Mid Ballet South

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## Junior Ballet South

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## Jazz South

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<td>Grace Holland</td>
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## Male Scholars

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<td>Iolan Williams</td>
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### Image

BBC Senior Ballet Scholars. Photo by Brian Lyons.
## Junior Ballet North

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## Mid Ballet North

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Lead Scholars Tutor in the North, David Needham, with BBO Jazz Scholars. Photo by Tim Cross.
## 2014 BBO Scottish Scholars

### Juniors

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### Mid Scholars

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### Seniors

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“In the 1980s, the idea of training for musical theatre was quite different to how it is now. The training of dancers and actors was well established, but not so for musical theatre, which was a comparatively new art form.”

Chris Hocking is Deputy Principal and Director of the Schools of Musical Theatre and Acting of Arts Educational Schools London. The list of the School’s famous graduates is impressive. Chris Hocking is a highly articulate interviewee who speaks rapidly and informatively, a natural teacher. His responses to questions are polished and professional and talking to him in his Chiswick headquarters is a pleasure.

A respected educationist, Chris can call upon a practical background in West End shows and extensive touring, which prompted my first question: How did your experiences in musical theatre inform the work you are doing now?

“That’s an interesting question because I trained with Nesta Brooking in Cecchetti technique and my goal was to join a ballet company. Nesta probably guessed I wouldn’t have a career in that field but I was offered a place in a European ballet company; but I was also offered a job in a touring musical, A Chorus Line, which I decided to take.

“In the 1980s the idea of training for musical theatre was quite different to how it is now. It was a comparatively new art form. The training of dancers and actors was well established, but not so for musical theatre. I was lucky because I could naturally sing and act, so I always got through auditions because of my versatility and worked in quite a lot of shows: Barnum, Hello Dolly, Chess, Carousel, The King and I and The Rocky Horror Show but it reached a point where I had a big soul searching session about what shape my future career should take. I had always been dance captain or assistant choreographer, taking company class and warm ups, and would always attend master-classes about the shows I was in at the time. So I applied for a job teaching ballet, modern, jazz and tap in Calabria, Italy, where no-one spoke English and where they had no concept of musical theatre so I created an Italian version of it. I also fell into choreographing TV shows at the same time and in the process I discovered a lot about technique by transmitting instructions in a second language. I had to really discover what it was I was talking about. I learned about technique through teaching it in pidgin Italian!

“Arts Educational Schools London has a very good partnership with the BBO and I hope it continues.”

“When I returned to London I stuck with teaching instead of going back into the West End. I worked as a freelance teacher at Elmhurst, LAMDA, Italia Conti, and eventually Mountview as Head of Dance, and then I was head-hunted to come here. In the ’90s I was really discovering how the elements of musical theatre came together to create a triple-threat performer. Nowadays I am calling it a quadruple threat: to sing, act, dance and look good, since more and more in this business, what you look like is very important. Boys have got to have gymnastic skills. In the ’50s, shows like Oklahoma! had separate ensembles. In the ’50s, shows like Carousel and Oklahoma! had separate singing and dancing ensembles but finance prevents that happening now; you have to have people who can sing and dance. Currently, in the West End, only Wicked has separate ensembles.” Chris has extensive experience as a choreographer and director: “Fiddler on the Roof, Jekyll and Hyde, South Pacific, Oklahoma!...I studied Agnes de Mille for my MA...and her estate called me up because they knew I would interpret Oklahoma! in her style. She was a difficult woman and Broadway producers eventually walked away from her because she never wanted any of her choreography cut; but musical theatre, by nature, is essentially collaborative.”

I ask Chris about Andrew Lloyd-Webber’s contribution to the school and he replies: “I arrived here in January 1999 when we had Dame Alicia as President. Now that role is taken by Andrew Lloyd-Webber and he has been a wonderful supporter to the school. The Andrew Lloyd-Webber Trust has given us £3.5 million for a new foyer, new 200 seat theatre, disability access, a TV studio and radio suite.”
Andrew is very hands-on and very helpful in terms of advice. He will pick up the phone and respond. Sometimes he just turns up. Each year he will pay for the training of one student for the full three years.

He isn’t just lending his name to supporting us and he comes to all our productions.” And does Chris still teach? “Yes, I still teach jazz dance to the second year. I teach nine classes a week and supervise audition preparation which is very important. We set up a student panel and run it as if it is a professional audition. I use my experience of being on panels to empower students for the process. You have to ask challenging questions, like: ‘In an American accent tell us what you had for breakfast?’ The process achieves results as every single student has an agent at graduation; and some have already signed up with big international agents; and 95% have work within a year of graduation. Our musical theatre students have all had experience of working in front of the camera as part of their training, so they can cross over from stage work to television. This makes them eminently employable. We also have a connection with the BBO: our studios are used by the BBO for their Scholars’ programme. This works very well as there is no conflict of interest in what each organisation is doing. We have a very good partnership with the BBO and hope it continues.”
A Passion for Teaching

“A good teacher has to inspire students and find the key to each individual to motivate them.”

Christopher Powney is a handsome, youthful and energetic man. He is prodigal with his valuable time when we talk in his new office at the Royal Ballet School in Covent Garden. He took up the position of Artistic Director Designate in April but he does not become Director until September. Throughout the interview he constantly speaks highly of Gailene Stock, his predecessor, saying: “I have a lot to thank Gailene for during my time as a teacher at the Royal Ballet School. She set me up in a strong way during my five and a half years here. I was the second year boys’ teacher at the Upper School where I had some wonderful students, like Xander Parish and Liam Scarlett. A lot of new energy came in with Gailene.”

Less than a week after his comments came the sad news that Stock had died.

Powney enjoyed a distinguished dancing career with Northern Ballet, English National Ballet and Rambert Dance Company, working with many of the world’s top choreographers. He discovered a natural talent for teaching at the age of 26, encouraged by his mentor Christopher Gable. He was Assistant Director of Ballet Central and had many years of teaching experience before joining the Royal Ballet School in 2000. He took up the post of Artistic Director of the Dutch National Ballet Academy in 2006 where he galvanised the organisation and gained the admiration of many colleagues. Asked which of his teaching appointments proved most useful, he says that they all provided insights into the teaching process but that his time in the Netherlands “...was a great experience. It was good to work in a different culture with a different mentality. I have only just arrived in London because I couldn’t leave the Dutch National Ballet Academy in a messy situation. I had initially been invited to teach at the Conservatoire in The Hague by Wim Broeckx but was initially reluctant to go as my wife and two small children were very happy in London (he is married to the Dutch choreographer Didy Veldman) but after 18 months we decided to give it a try and that led to the post in Amsterdam.”

Powney is tight lipped about his ambitions and plans for the Royal Ballet School as he has not yet started his tenure...”But in conversation he is passionate, generous with his opinions and entirely frank and open. When pressed about the general situation he admits that “There is a strong sense of entitlement in Western Europe, which can make students uncompetitive. But the key to this profession is motivation, drive and passion! Our British character comes out in our dancing. We have classical refinement and purity, our style is not brash but it is dramatic. Our dancers know how to play a role on stage. We also have a strong sense of humour, which manifests itself particularly in the choreography of Ashton and also MacMillan. We are not naturally competitive but there is a healthy way to compete; one can do it in an educated way, striving for targets. Competitions on the international training scene are healthy, with a lot of shared knowledge. We all want our students to attain their dreams.”

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“I absolutely live off the passion of what I do.”
The Royal Ballet Schools’ new Director, Christopher Powney, discusses his new post with Mike Dixon

Since re-appraisal will be an obvious task in his new post, I ask Powney what he looks for in a good teacher? He responds immediately: “An understanding of technique; and just as importantly, a good communicator. It doesn’t matter what you know, you have to be able to communicate that knowledge. A good teacher has to inspire students and find the key to each individual to motivate them. A training zone is a precious place that has to have the right energy to discover the artist in each individual. Vocabulary is not everything; an artist has to have something to say, so technique, artistry and musicality are all important.” And what will he do about the long, jealously-held, traditions of the Royal Ballet School? “The Royal Ballet School is an iconic institution. There are many things that work well here and I have a huge respect for our heritage but classical dance training has to move forward constantly. Dealing with kids growing up one is responsible for the whole person, not just their dance training. The School has to reflect the progression in dance training generally. I am an internationalist but I also believe that if we allow British dancers to achieve their potential we will end up with more British principal dancers. The star-making process happens within the Royal Ballet, indeed any ballet company, not in the dance school but you have to give a positive mindset to a child as a foundation for their future. You also have to be realistic and not give them false hope about their potential career. You also have to be honest with their parents, who might have unrealistic ideas about their child’s abilities.”

The Royal Ballet School is divided into the Upper School in Covent Garden and Lower School (White Lodge) in Richmond Park but under Powney, they will be run as one institution and he will have a presence on both sites every week, creating effectively one school with a continuous curriculum. An academic/pastoral principal will also work on both sites. It is clear that Powney will be hands-on as a teacher. Powney states emphatically “I am a big team player and I value the different backgrounds and experiences of teachers. The Board is also very supportive, especially the Chairman Lady Douro, and we have generous donors who ensure that no talented child is turned down on financial grounds.

The barometer of my success in ten years time will lie in whether the school functions effectively.” Powney is unstuffy and energetic, a natural motivator who will act as a breath of fresh air in an institution that is currently primed to move forward and regenerate. As he says: “I absolutely live off the passion of what I do.”

“Competitions on the international training scene are healthy, with a lot of shared knowledge. We all want our students to attain their dreams.”

“I have a lot to thank Gailene [Stock] for during my time as a teacher at the Royal Ballet School. She set me up in a strong way.”

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Jane Pritchard is Curator of Dance in the Theatre Performance Department at London’s Victoria and Albert Museum but we conduct our interview in the quietly surreal setting of the top floor salon of the Sarasota Opera House in Florida. The previous day Jane had given a fascinating lecture on Frederick Ashton’s early years working for Marie Rambert at the historic Asolo Theatre which had been hugely successful. She is essentially a reserved, serious person but becomes animated and enthusiastic whenever she discusses her work and has a wonderful open smile and well-developed sense of humour. “I am the first official curator of dance at the V&A although dance is not a separate department and we all work together and one of the strengths of the department is that it is undivided. In the nineteenth century when one went to the theatre one could see ballet, opera and drama on the same bill. It was only in the twentieth century that dance became ghettoised as a separate form of theatre. The V&A really started collecting when Mrs Gabrielle Enthoven donated her collection of London West End theatre material in 1925; and Richard Buckle’s collection, among others, later introduced more specialised dance material, including costumes. Other destinations existed which is why in the 1930’s the Pavlova material went to the Museum of London. When Mrs Enthoven died in 1950, after continuing to pay for acquisitions, it was already a substantial theatre collection. The demise of the Theatre Museum in Covent Garden was due to the intractable nature of the building and the admission charge. Now we have our own gallery at the V&A and admission is free, so we have many more visitors.” Jane read History at the University of Warwick and went into theatre administration after graduation and became passionate about dance: “...but I was frustrated at not being able to attend the dance performances I wished to see. When ABT were at the Coliseum I had a taxi waiting with its engine ticking over to get me to the performance immediately after a fire officer’s visit to the theatre in Greenwich! I worked in many places including the Puppet Centre at Battersea Arts Centre. I attended the archivist’s course at Manchester University in 1979 after John Travis told me about his training there. Afterwards there were no obvious jobs to go to so I acted as a volunteer at Festival Ballet in 1980 and after a few weeks they started to pay me. I also worked on the LCDT archive at The Place. In 1982 I was appointed as the full time archivist at Rambert Dance Company. The overlap of these companies allowed me to gain a great deal of knowledge and my background in theatre has been useful: I have done every aspect of production from administration to the “get-out” after the show. “Joining the V&A in 2006 was quite traumatic initially, as I felt isolated, but when I commenced organising the Diaghilev exhibition I found I was part of a bigger group of experts. The management had already talked about a Ballets Russes exhibition during my interview, which I co-curated with Geoff Marsh, who is not a dance specialist. We bounced ideas off each other and immediately agreed that the experience for the visitor was to be about the totality of theatre. It was planned over a four year period; and we needed to act early to secure loans in advance of the other big international Diaghilev shows. For two years it was hard to concentrate on anything else. Left to my...”

“I opened a John Lewis bag and found two original Benois designs; I opened a programme and some telegrams from Diaghilev to Karsavina fell out; and a receipt for Markova’s pointe shoes...”
own devices we would have opened in 2011, the centenary of the Ballets Russes’ first tour to London, but opening in 2010 didn’t really bother me as the early, developmental years of any company are frequently vague. Geoff insisted that we got the design team on board early. We wanted to hang the *Firebird* and *Le train bleu* cloths and there was only one area to hang them both. That was the starting point. Eventually the central rooms were about process and the outer rooms about chronology. The V&A has strict guidelines that no more than 300 objects can be displayed in a single exhibition, so one had to decide the purpose of each object. You have to give people what they want, so there was a focus on Nijinsky but we also wanted to include some surprises and moving images. It took a lot of selection and research.”

The huge Diaghilev exhibition toured to Quebec, Barcelona, Madrid and Washington, with loans of different material at each venue. Jane also felt she had to create a chronology of what the Ballets Russes actually performed in Britain. “Just under half of the complete total of Ballets Russes performances took place in this country and *Prince Igor* was performed at 25% of them!

Not a lot is written about *Igor* because Nijinsky didn’t dance in it but it was an adaptable piece that could be cut as it is essentially about atmosphere; both Nijinsky and Massine worked on it after Fokine left the company.”

Asked about a typical working day, Jane laughs: “There is no typical day. I flag up material to individuals doing research and I love it when researchers go into un-mined areas of the collection. We don’t really have the funds to buy things but people are very generous and so we have to examine and select items that will complement the collections. We also make loans to complement other collections. If there is a major exhibition taking place we have to make material accessible. There are treasure troves of material. When we acquired the collection of Rachel Cameron (a friend of Karsavina) I had an exciting morning. I opened a John Lewis bag and found two original Benois designs; I opened a programme and some telegrams from Diaghilev to Karsavina fell out; and a receipt for Markova’s pointe shoes to be rubberised for *La Chatte*. Objects like this humanise the whole story. It is terribly important to go back and look at artefacts as they can illuminate pre-existing information.

Documentation is very important but can be misleading. Theatre programmes record what was supposed to happen but not always what actually happened; costumes carry information about who wore them; and even annotations in musical scores carry vital clues. The obvious place is not always the best place to look as things get mis-catalogued but at the V&A all the archival material is in one place and can be examined in a holistic way.”

Jane Pritchard is a fortuitous combination of theatrical knowledge, memory, perception and detective work. She is the British dance-world’s own Miss Marple and an unsung national treasure. “Jane is a fortuitous combination of theatrical knowledge, memory, perception and detective work. She is the British dance-world’s own Miss Marple and an unsung national treasure. She brings a sense of joy to her vital work and shares it generously with others.”

Jane Pritchard is Curator of Dance, Theatre and Performance Collections at the V&A Museum, with her MBE, in recognition of her services to the arts.
Busy Boyz

The Ballet Boyz, Michael Nunn and William Trevitt, were once described by The New York Times as “A couple of daring, funny blokes with a flair for the avant-garde” which is a good starting point for discussing this talented pair of ex-Royal Ballet dancers who have created a unique identity for themselves, and their subsequent collaborators, both on stage and television.

They have raised the profile of dance through their work as television presenters and dance innovators and as a double act surely created in Heaven. Discussing their time with the company, Billy says: “We were both blessed; it was a wonderful time with interesting people. Irek (Mukhamedov) made a big difference to the aspirations of male dancers and we witnessed Sylvie Guillem’s great craft as an artist. We worked with great choreographers too, like Tetley and Forsythe and Ashton was still around. We left to join K Ballet in Japan because there was instability in the Royal Ballet at the time, with the rebuilding of the Royal Opera House about to start and not enough weeks of work. We had a fantastic opportunity to pioneer something new but with no guarantee that it would work out. We rehearsed in London and then everything was shipped to Tokyo. We were living here with our families but touring in Japan.

It took time for people in the Royal Ballet to work out where we stood but eventually, after forming our own Company, we returned to the Royal Opera House with Sylvie in a wonderful piece by Russell Maliphant. We also did the video work for Chris Wheeldon’s Electric Counterpoint and the Romeo and Juliet video when the Royal Ballet was at the O2 Arena. So we have done some interesting projects with them on our own terms. With all companies the ground covers over very quickly and very few of the dancers there at the moment know us personally.”

Michael agrees: “We don’t have regrets. We should have left the Royal Ballet sooner. Our training and performance connections to powerful designers and choreographers gave us a visa into the area of production which we should have exploited earlier than we did,”
Billy says: “The Ballet Boyz is now seen as a brand. People are very happy to know the Ballet Boyz are coming. They are less interested in the choreographers but associate our brand with quality. They aren’t disappointed. Basically the brand is just us cooking up ideas in our shed and going where the mood takes us. With our dancers we try to develop the widest range of experience for them. More experiences make them more interesting as dancers. We are constantly looking for new collaborators to develop the formula of the ten male dancers and continue to make the shows look different. We still think there is space to develop the concept of the all male dance company. The last UK show of our current rep will be in July/August at The Roundhouse in Chalk Farm, where we first started. There will be a new season, with new work at The Linbury Theatre in September and then in January we are back at the Wells with a full evening work by Ivan Perez, a young Spaniard who was a dancer with Netherlands Dance Theatre. He is a very beautiful dancer himself and his approach is very interesting, allowing the dancers a lot of creative freedom. We will be performing a one act preview to his full length work when we are at The Roundhouse." Michael agrees about the branding aspect of their identity. “I quite like the fact that the name is less about Billy and me. Most companies are named after the choreographer but we work in a niche market, a small area of entertainment, where the name of our choreographers may not be widely known but the name Ballet Boyz doesn’t confuse people and they have an idea of what they will get and that it will represent quality.”

“They have raised the profile of dance through their work as television presenters and dance innovators and as a double act surely created in Heaven.”
I ask Michael about their new Headquarters in Kingston upon Thames. “It is close to Kingston station and used to be the old Hawker Siddeley munitions factory. We have two large studios and an editing suite. There are two floors and lots of head height. Previously, half the building was a laundry and half was a shop selling mobility items. We gutted it, refurbished it, kept the best original architectural features and put on a new roof.” The space is spectacular with exposed brickwork walls and a pitched roof supported by ironwork: industrial chic.

“It was a massive investment. Billy walked past it one day (he lives nearby) and saw it was up for lease. We use the studios for rehearsals but also rent out space to a lot of companies including Hofesh Shechter and the RAD. John Travis at the BBO recently approached us to film their updated syllabus. Well, filming dance is what we do! We can create a great on-line package and traditional dvds. The whole process will take years; it is a huge amount of work. The important thing is that it is done right and looks professional.”

“The Ballet Boyz is now seen as a brand. People are very happy to know the Ballet Boyz are coming.”

The obvious thing to observe about the Ballet Boyz is their versatility: as principal dancers, company directors, choreographers, teachers, television presenters and film makers; their sheer fecundity makes their brand special. They have the full confidence of film networks and theatres and other dance and technical professionals. They are hands-on and unconstrained by any form of pigeon holing. Michael says: “It is an enormous benefit to have a name that is essentially a kitemark. Running your own business is an eye-opener. You have to work out the image and the plan for the work years in advance. The kitemark is now a part of us, since we are not employees, we are employers of many people and that gives you a different perspective on things.”
The Ballet Boyz, Michael Nunn and William Trevitt, talk about their new projects with Mike Dixon
The Dance Teachers’ Benevolent Fund was founded in 1979 to provide pastoral, financial and practical assistance to qualified dance teachers of any age who are suffering temporary or long term hardship. It is the only fund that cares for teachers of dance from all disciplines, regardless of their professional affiliation. A Registered Charity (no. 278899), the Dance Teachers’ Benevolent Fund is administered by an independent Board of Trustees. Donations and/or legacies are always welcome and every contribution, no matter how small, is acknowledged by the Secretary.

The Dancing Times acts as the honorary forwarding address and all communications should be addressed to:
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On a glorious sunny day at the Sadler’s Wells theatre, the BBO’s new graduating teachers arrived with their families for the presentation of their awards. In contrast to the formality often expected at these kinds of events, the afternoon offered a relaxed, friendly and pleasurable ambiance for all guests. A warm welcome from BBO CEO, John Travis, set the scene aptly, as he commended the graduate teachers on their achievements and encouraged them in their future careers.

In addressing the teachers, John Travis enthused, “The commitment and dedication you have shown throughout the course and the challenges you have faced have all paid off as you receive a Government-recognised dance teaching qualification. The BBO is so proud of your achievement and will continue to support you in your ongoing career development.”

As a world leader in dance, Sadler’s Wells brings the best of international and British dance to its stunning venue in North London. The BBO was extremely proud to host this year’s ceremony at such a prestigious dance venue. The event was made particularly special by Guest of Honour, Mark Baldwin, Artistic Director of the Rambert Dance Company. Mark took time from his hectic schedule to present the awards as the Rambert Company were due to open their season two days later at Sadler’s Wells Theatre.

Mark delivered a highly entertaining and informative address. He spoke about the number of teachers who have influenced his career and stressed the importance of good teaching. He also enlightened guests with news of a particularly exciting collaboration with Dame Monica Mason that is to be premiered at the Edinburgh Festival, followed by a season at the Sadler’s Wells Theatre.

Mark congratulated all the graduates and posed for many photographs with the newly qualified teachers. Family and friends also took the opportunity to photograph the proud moment of their loved ones receiving their qualification from one of the country’s most distinguished Artistic Directors.

A total of 23 students graduated from the BBO, including Kamara Gray, who had previously taught the BBO syllabus in Kuwait and has returned to continue her teaching in the UK.

The BBO was also particularly delighted that the students who undertook the qualification at the Steelworks Performing Arts Academy, in Stoke-on-Trent, were able to join the event, despite having to navigate their way through the Arsenal FA Cup victory parade!

Following the ceremony, everyone was treated to afternoon tea, cucumber sandwiches and cake served by the Sadler’s Wells staff, who helped make the event a truly memorable occasion.

John Travis closed the event by thanking Mark Baldwin and all at Sadler’s Wells and the BBO who had helped to ensure the success of the ceremony. He made particular mention of the BBO’s Director of Education, Mary Goodhew, who runs the Teaching Qualifications, and the Organization’s Head of Communications and Events, Jonathan Maydew, who coordinated the ceremony. Next year’s event certainly has one very tough act to follow...
## BBO Annual Teaching Qualifications Awards

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<tr>
<th>Graduate</th>
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<tr>
<td>Alexis Wickwire Ephgrave</td>
<td>Diploma in Dance Teaching (Level 4)</td>
<td>Classical Ballet</td>
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<td>Amy Louise Dunbill</td>
<td>Diploma in Dance Teaching (Level 4)</td>
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<td>Anna Quasyle</td>
<td>Diploma in Dance Teaching (Level 4)</td>
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<td>Charlotte Walker</td>
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<td>Emma Wingfield</td>
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<td>Esther Greaves</td>
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<td>Jennie Loraso</td>
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<td>Nicola Carter</td>
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<td>Olivia Birkin</td>
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<td>Rebecca Ayse Kilincarslan</td>
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<td>Sally Ruth Brown</td>
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<td>Sara Oldfield</td>
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<td>Zoe Harrison</td>
<td>Diploma in Dance Teaching (Level 4)</td>
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<td>Zhanat Atymtayev</td>
<td>Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (Level 4)</td>
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<td>Kamara Gray</td>
<td>Diploma for Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (Level 5)</td>
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<td>Aaron Francis</td>
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<td>Claire Sibley</td>
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<td>Luciane Neves</td>
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<td>Natalie Pearce</td>
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<td>Stacie Pollard</td>
<td>Diploma in Dance Teaching (Level 6)</td>
<td>Commercial Theatre</td>
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*Rambert’s Artistic Director, Mark Baldwin, addressing the BBO graduates. Photo by Success Photography.*

*Sadler’s Wells. Photo by Morley Von Sternberg.*
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The generosity of donors supporting the organisation during their lifetime or through their Will is fundamental to the continued success of the BBO. Whether you are a Member of the BBO, a supporter of our ongoing work, have an interest in engaging young people through dance or simply have a passion for this incredible art form and want to see the BBO continue in its important work, you can make a huge difference.

To ensure that the Organization continues to play a fundamental role in this country’s cultural life, the BBO must invest in its facilities, regional programmes and more resources for its teachers and students. If you are unable to make a financial commitment to the BBO during your lifetime, leaving a gift in your Will is an easy and efficient way to give to the Organization. If you are an existing donor, it can also be a valuable way to increase your support.

Legacies can be used to support all aspects of our work and can be donated towards general purposes or a specific aspect of the BBO’s work. Every gift in every Will makes a difference and you will have the satisfaction of knowing that you will be helping:

- This country’s next generation of dancers and teachers achieve their potential;
- Hundreds of thousands of young people keen to make dance a part of their lives;
- The UK’s cultural landscape as the BBO continually feeds the dance industry with exceptional talent.

A bequest to the BBO can simply be set up by adding a codicil to a Will at any time and leaving a legacy to the BBO may also have tax benefits for the donor’s Estate.

**The tax implications of making a donation in your Will:**
As the BBO is a registered charity, no inheritance tax is payable on the amount of your gift, since charities are exempt from paying this tax. Thus, it is worth bearing in mind that you can choose either to pay the tax to the Inland Revenue or to a charity whose work you value. Furthermore, the Government’s introduction of a 10% legacy gift incentive in return for a reduction on Inheritance Tax may be of interest. (The BBO would advise that you consult a professional for clear advice on this issue and the implications for your personal Estate).

The BBO is extremely grateful to all those who have already remembered the Organization in their Will. If the time is ever right for you to leave the BBO a gift in your Will, that would be amazing.

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A gift in your Will ensures the BBO’s work continues and that your love and interest in dance lives on.

The British Ballet Organization Ltd. is a charity registered in England (no. 277177).
How can we support our dancers to maintain their positive experience of dancing, persevere in the face of challenge and take risks with their learning? Here, Elsa Urmston, MSc Dance Science Programme Coordinator at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, talks to The Dancer about what teachers and dancers can learn from positive psychology, to enable dancers to reach higher levels of achievement, whilst remaining positive, confident young people.

“"The life of the young dancer in training is often a complex and busy one, managing physically and psychologically demanding dance classes, alongside academic studies, homework and other interests too. Young people come to dance for many reasons, usually propelled by an innate love of dancing in the first instance. Yet the context of a dance class can be equally challenging when faced with difficult steps to learn and perfect, a continuous stream of feedback from teachers and sometimes a competitive environment in which dancers compare themselves with others in the class.

Motivation: A self-determined approach

Dancers are often competitive in winning roles and jobs over their colleagues. They compare themselves to their peers and whilst this is a reality of working in the sector, it can be detrimental to the dancer’s psychological wellbeing. Nurturing self-determined behaviour and providing an autonomy supportive environment for learning to take place, can help to minimise these problems. Self-determination is predicated on the fulfillment of three basic psychological needs: that of autonomy, competence and relatedness. Autonomy is defined by individuals having a strong sense of who they are and being able to act independently with the feeling that they can exert control over their environments. Competence is conceived as people feeling that they have the necessary skills to undertake a task. Relatedness refers to the sense of belonging that individuals experience as a result of their involvement in an activity. Autonomy-supportive and relatedness-supportive environments in dance have been said to support self-determined behaviours and lead to intrinsic motivation. Shaping practice around principles that support intrinsic motivation and positive motivational climates may underpin psychological wellbeing in the dance class, so how might this be done? The construct of flow may provide some insight.

Flow: Enhancing intrinsic motivation

Flow is a holistic sensation in which people feel that they are ‘totally absorbed by an activity at a given moment in time’, often described by dancers as being ‘in the moment’. It is considered the pinnacle of intrinsic motivation, where one participates in an activity for no reason beyond itself; Csikszentmihalyi terms this autotelic experience. The framework of flow may offer dance teachers an opportunity to shape their practice and create a positive motivational climate, by drawing on the principles of flow to enable dancers to experience autonomy, competence and relatedness as part of their dance participation.
An essential element of the flow state includes the balance between one’s perceived skill and the challenge of the task ahead. An advanced level dancer may consider a double pirouette an easy accomplishment and will rarely attain flow as they are likely to be bored or even apathetic, as skills outweigh the challenge presented. Yet when challenged to achieve a multiple pirouette with the leg in attitude, the advanced dancer may well become anxious because the challenge outweighs the dancer’s skills. Whilst challenging for the teacher to differentiate for every class member, if positive levels of competence are to be perceived by the dancer, it is necessary for adaptations in material to be provided. Playing down the competitive and social comparisons which dancers make in this context is useful and encouraging dancers to work together to identify the steps required in acquiring the new skill can further support autonomy and relatedness. Scaffolding tasks so that skill level is developed over time appears to help flow be achieved and competence be perceived positively from the dancer’s perspective.

Supporting dancers to identify clear goals is a vital component in attaining flow; knowing exactly what to do provides clarity of intention, which in turn facilitates concentration. When goals are owned by dancers, it is more likely that they will be met, because the dancers understand the meaning and significance of them in reaching larger outcomes. Offering opportunities for dancers to participate in decision-making and goal-setting can be a useful tool in supporting relatedness between members of the group. Providing unambiguous teacher-and peer-feedback, which relates to the goals set, will help students confirm their competence and relatedness still further. Rewarding successful approximations of movements during skill acquisition phases, alongside positive feedback for effort and successful skill performance, means that feedback has a focus on improvement in relation to learning and progress, rather than negative performance. The principles of autonomy and competence are supported and indeed flow is more likely to be attained.

Recent research in dance education offers insight into optimal environmental and situational conditions, which allow flow to prosper, and so autonomy, competence and relatedness to flourish also. For the dancer in training, these include: allowing sufficient time for discussion, exploration and learning to occur and acknowledging the different routes to mastering a skill that are possible; engendering an environment of trust and non-judgment amongst peers and teachers by embracing and learning together from mistakes, whilst celebrating successful completion of tasks as part of the team; and building a community of learning in which students and teachers play a collaborative and evolving role in learning and development. Thus, it is clear that dancers will achieve flow if they feel at ease and autonomous in the role that they play in the dance class, have high levels of perceived competence and a strong sense of belonging. By adapting practice and providing opportunities for our dancers to take control of their learning in a supportive environment, we are able to see our dancers prosper and flourish.”

Elsa Urmston is also Education Committee Member at the International Association of Dance Medicine and Science and Dance Health Educator at DanceEast Centre for Advanced Training.

References and Further Reading

   http://fcd.new.ncyork.co.uk/DB/animated-library/peer-pleasure.html?ed=14057
Doreen Wells remembers David Wall CBE (1946-2013)

The British Ballet Organization was deeply saddened to hear of the death of acclaimed performer, David Wall, and our thoughts continue to be with his wife – former dancer, Alfrida Thorogood, and his family at this difficult time. On behalf of the BBO, CEO, John Travis, attended the thanksgiving service, in celebration of David’s life, which was held at St Martin-in-the-Fields in London on 22nd May 2014.

Led by Reverend Sam Wells, the service was attended by Father Joseph McCullough, Chaplain of the Royal Marsden Hospital, as well as the great and the good from the dance world, including: Lady MacMillan Patricia Linton; Desmond Kelly CBE; Christopher Laurence-Price; and James Streeter, all of whom gave a personal address.

BBO Patron and former dance partner of David Wall, **Doreen Wells – the Marchioness of Londonderry**, was also present at the memorial. Here, she talks fondly about her partnership with David, which was recently described by Mike Dixon as ‘one of the greatest ballet partnerships of the 20th Century. ’

“As a ballerina, I was blessed to have David Wall as my partner. I had total confidence in him as he was a great dancer and actor. He was down-to-earth and approachable, with a wonderful sense of humour. David had balance in his life from being a great artist to a caring family man. This was something very special.

One particularly moving story from the memorial service that will always stay with me was from Patricia Linton’s address. She remembered David sitting in front of her during a written exam, when he turned round, smiled, looked at the open door where the sun was shining through and got up to go outside, completely drawn to the beauty of nature!

Of course, David then went on to become one of the youngest stars of the Royal Ballet. His roles covered a wide spectrum; from the classics to the contemporary, from comedy to drama, and he excelled at them all. Henry Roach played some particularly poignant music for the service, evoking memories of David’s various roles on stage. David was a ‘choreographer’s gift’. His depth of understanding of the characters he played made him become those roles, which for me, was so inspiring.”
Under the award-winning artistic direction of Mark Baldwin, Rambert creates bold, ambitious works and performs for audiences throughout the UK and beyond. On 21st March 2014, Her Majesty The Queen, accompanied by His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh, officially opened Rambert’s new home on the South Bank.

Her Majesty and His Royal Highness were given a tour of Rambert’s new home. During their visit, The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh observed the Company in rehearsal for Mark Baldwin’s new work, which premières at Sadler’s Wells in November, and viewed Rambert’s Archive, a collection of national significance. The Queen and The Duke also met Rambert dancers and staff, and those responsible for designing and building Rambert’s new home.

Rambert’s Chair, Sir Howard Panter said: “It’s a huge honour and greatly appreciated by everyone at Rambert and by all those who have worked so hard to support the building of our new world class home, to have Her Majesty the Queen and His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh officially open it.”

Rambert, Britain’s national dance company, took up residency in its new, £19.6 million home in the heart of London’s South Bank in December 2013. The state-of-the-art building includes dance studios, treatment and body conditioning rooms, production workshops, offices and an extensive archive. It was designed by award-winning architects Allies and Morrison and built by Vinci Construction UK.

The new building, 12 years in the planning, is located on a site on Upper Ground owned by social enterprise Coin Street Community Builders. This land has been made available to Rambert in return for a commitment to provide a significant community dance programme in the local area, and for a peppercorn rent of one pair of ballet shoes a year.

Her Majesty The Queen visited Rambert’s old building in Chiswick in 2001 on the occasion of the Company’s 75th anniversary.

Founded by Marie Rambert in 1926, Britain’s oldest dance company is firmly focused on the future; retaining its founder’s pioneering commitment to new choreography and developing dancers as artists, and seeking new ways to engage people of all ages in watching, creating and performing dance.
A new generation of dancers will be able to gain access to top quality training as London Studio Centre (LSC) launches its brand new junior programme this year.

The Saturday Junior Associate Classes will bring dancers between the ages of 7 and 14 into the college, to benefit from the expertise and experience of leading professionals and the advantages of state-of-the-art facilities.

Cris Penfold, course co-ordinator for London Studio Centre’s Saturday programmes, believes the classes present a fantastic opportunity for young dancers to progress in their jazz and ballet technique, whilst continuing to have fun with dance. “I’m very proud that we are launching the Saturday junior programme, which will bring the next generation of dancers to London Studio Centre. Our Saturday Associate Programme has been a great success for older teenagers over the past year, and it’s a mark of that success that we’re now extending the programme to the younger years. It will be brilliant for them to experience all that LSC has to offer and have the fun of meeting other young dancers.”

The One Year Saturday Associate Programme has been running since September 2013, aiding dancers with ambitions of going into full-time training to reach the necessary standard for entry into some of the top dance colleges.

“Not only do we fine tune technical skills that might one day help them achieve their goals of full-time training and professional work”, Cris added, “but they also learn to express themselves and be confident in their movement, which is a great ability for anyone to have, especially from a young age.”

London Studio Centre is now permanently resident in artsdepot, North Finchley, in a collaborative partnership with the arts venue. The new Saturday Junior Associate Classes aim to reach out to the local community around the college, in which artsdepot already plays a vital and diverse role, as well as to young dancers further afield.

Director, Nic Espinosa, commented: “We love our new home in North Finchley and our new junior programme is an exciting opportunity to make stronger links in the local community and beyond. It will give more young people access to high quality dance lessons, and a fun, energising way to spend their Saturdays!

London Studio Centre’s mission is to train students to the highest standard to become future performers. A significant part of our work is not just with our full-time students, but those dancers who come to us on Saturdays, on our Boys’ Day and to our summer schools, which attract teenagers from around the world. We’re looking forward to welcoming our youngest dancers to the college.”

For more information about the Saturday Junior Associate Classes, Saturday Associate Programme and full-time courses, visit www.londonstudiocentre.org.

“We love our new home in North Finchley and our new junior programme is an exciting opportunity to make stronger links in the local community and beyond. It will give more young people access to high quality dance lessons, and a fun, energising way to spend their Saturdays!” Nic Espinosa, LSC Director
On 1st November 2013, the winners of the UK’s first IDS Dance School of the Year Award were announced at a black-tie dinner held at The Palace Hotel, Torquay. The glittering event – also celebrating the 35th anniversary of IDS – was attended by representatives of dance schools from all over the UK, as well as notable people from the dance and business worlds, including BBO Artistic Consultant, Brenda Last OBE. The awards were presented jointly by Wayne Sleep OBE, and Founder and CEO of IDS, Anne Walker MBE.

If you think your school should win this prestigious award – why not enter next year’s Awards?

Schools are judged on elements of their business, contribution to local community, growth related to length of time since founding and related success stories for the business year. The judges also consider the way the school is run and the business skills demonstrated by its Principal.

The entries are split into 3 categories: Under 100 pupils; Over 100 pupils; and Vocational Schools. The winner of each category is awarded a stunning trophy, as well as many other prizes but the Overall Winning School will receive £1,000 to spend with IDS, in addition to other rewards, such as two complimentary places at the International Dance Teacher Conference, brought to you by IDS.

Founder & CEO of IDS, Anne Walker commented, “I was thrilled that there was such a positive response to our inaugural awards, with entries from over 100 schools nationwide. We launched the IDS Dance School of the Year Awards last year, in celebration of our 35th anniversary. I hope that the awards will encourage schools to develop and grow in all ways, and in turn, raise the standard of excellence across the sector.”

Entries have already closed for this year’s Awards (based on what your school achieved in 2013) so start collecting information now in order to enter your school for this wonderful recognition next year.

Lorna Procter, Principal of Procter Dance Academy in Liverpool, said, “I am extremely proud and honoured to be the winner in the ‘Over 100 pupils’ category. It is a remarkable achievement and represents many years of hard work and determination. Thank you to Dance School of the Year for recognising how wonderful the staff and pupils are at Procter Dance Academy. We have had great publicity from this Award and have had many new enquiries to the school. We are delighted with our win.”

For more information visit www.ids.co.uk and click Dance School of the Year.
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