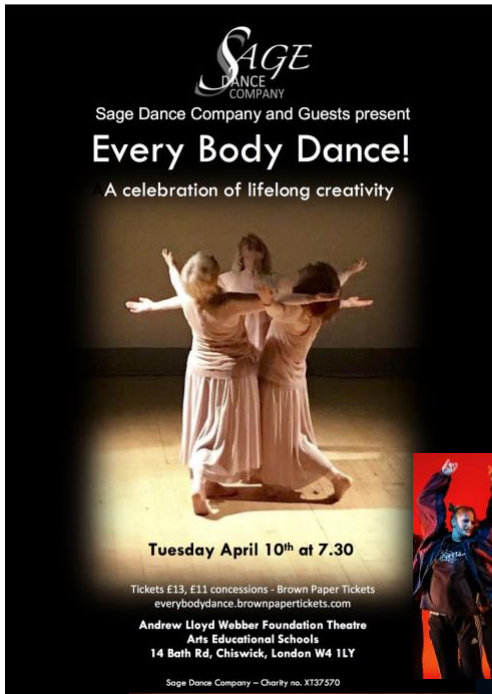


NEWSLETTER – SPRING/SUMMER 2018



Well, we did it!

On April 10th at the Arts Educational Schools theatre in West London we achieved our long-held ambition of hosting an evening of dance for all, **EVERY BODY DANCE!**

After four months of very hard work we created a programme which featured dancers of all ages and showcased a wide variety of dance styles. As well as new and existing work from us at Sage, the programme included some wonderful pieces from our guest performers, **Thomas Page Dances, Slide, Ready Willing Able, Arts Educational 6th Formers and Manifest Nation.**



The audience had no time to get bored as we moved from classical ballet to contemporary, from tap to hip-hop. It was a privilege for us to dance alongside these exciting and innovative groups, and we are keen to work with them again.

Together we showed that everybody can dance throughout their whole lives.



Photos: Chris Daw

Here are some of the words audience members used in their feedback to describe the show:

“Life-affirming, beautiful, creative, fun, different, terrific mixture of styles, grace, wit, exciting, fluid, inspirational, joyful, uplifting, great music, emotional, thought-provoking, delightful, stimulating, well-chosen, happy, imaginative, moving, moments of unbearable tenderness and truly fabulous!”

This was a big step for us both financially and technically. The Arts Educational Theatre was a wonderful space for us to perform in and our thanks to Arts Ed staff Di Stedman, Phil Bell and to our Stage Manager Micaela Corcoran who did much to encourage and reassure us that “it would be alright on the night”! Which indeed it was – their input made for a very professional show which ran like clockwork. And, of course, our thanks to our Artistic Director, Simon Rice, who has taken us this far and believed in us enough to encourage our ambition.

CHOREOGRAPHY WORKSHOPS

For Sage to pull off a programme like this we need to be able to add continually to our repertoire, quite a challenge for a ballet-based community dance group for the over 55’s! One of the ways in which we have been able to create new work has been through a programme of choreography workshops run by Simon Rice.

New works *Trifariam* and *Friend* have come through this route and have been well received by audiences. *Another Presence*, choreographed by guest choreographer Fionuala Power working with Sage dancer Teresa Thornber-Mann has also provided a beautiful addition to our body of work.



Photos: Chris Daw

We are very pleased to announce that a £2000 grant from the **Foyle Foundation** has helped us to fund this work. A new series of choreographic workshops began in May and we are hoping to work with guest choreographer Thomas Page in the autumn. We will definitely have several new works to showcase by the end of the year.

IT’S FESTIVAL TIME

We have a busy few months ahead. Here’s a note of our forthcoming festival performances:

May 13	Dance West’s Ignition Festival at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith
May 12–18	B(old) Moves Festival South Bank, London
June 3	Hammersmith and Fulham Festival Hammersmith Town Hall
June 23	Chelmsford Festival
October 17-21	Bloomsbury Festival

For **Ignition, Hammersmith and Fulham and Chelmsford** we will be performing our latest piece, ***Gitanes***. Choreographed by Simon Rice, it is danced to some beautiful music taken from Vivaldi and the Baroque Gypsies. Each of the four sections which make up the piece is unique in mood and rhythm. The first is hypnotic, the second bold and energetic, the third humorous and the fourth mysterious. It is a real joy to dance to such music.



Photos: Chris Daw

The B(old) festival is a celebration of older dancers and is bringing together performers from some of the capital's most established companies under the direction of Mark Baldwin, former director of Ballet Rambert. A week of rehearsals will culminate in a performance on May 18th in the Clore Ballroom at the Royal Festival Hall.

At the **Bloomsbury Festival** we have been offered the opportunity to recreate our *Every Body Dance* show in full, so if you missed it the first time round here's your chance to see us with all our guest artists in a great evening of dance.

OUR NEW PATRON



Photo: Max Mukhamedov

We are deeply honoured and thrilled that the legendary Irek Mukhamedov became our patron this spring. Former Principal at the Bolshoi Ballet and the Royal Ballet, he is currently guest Principal Ballet Master at English National Ballet (ENB) and teaches and coaches extensively overseas. His recent performances have included the role of Diego Riviera in Annabelle Lopez Ochoa's *Broken Dreams* for ENB and a solo created for him by Arthur Pita, *Jingling from the Zills*, for Ivan Putrov's *Men in Motion*.



NEXT STEPS – TAKING OUR SHOW ON THE ROAD

We would dearly love to meet some of the passionate dancers who have written to us asking if we could take our work out of London and encourage those who want to move forward in a similar direction.

Here's an example of the passion, experience and need that is out there:

“As a fully trained Royal Academy of Dance and Imperial Society of Teacher of Dance teacher and performer for over 35 years, based in the North West, I was thrilled to see an advertisement for Sage Dance Company fly past when scrolling through Facebook and immediately clicked the link for more information. I spend my working days teaching and facilitating exercise classes, adult ballet classes and as a living history actor/facilitator as well as touring a WW1 piece, so am constantly 'giving out' and have been searching and searching for something in which to immerse myself to 'take in'.

This is what I've been looking forso so long!

Excitement grew but again only to be dashed on realising yet again that this fantastic company are London based.

Having 'retired' from dance teaching about 18 months ago whilst continuing to act and sing professionally, I felt a form of bereavement which completely knocked me for six ... I was a dancer, but my identity had suddenly been axed. Needless to say that when some past students approached me to start a class for them, having tried all other forms of ballet based exercise classes, Pilates, aerobics etc. Again, I jumped at the chance.

Simply 'if dance is in your blood you cannot deny it'

But there is no outlet for the performance aspect of ballet anywhere, to my knowledge, in the North of England for the older, but trained dancer, and it is desperately needed. We, as a society are trying to beat the obesity crisis, to try and encourage children and adults to move more but options are incredibly limited for the older ex dancer to fulfil their need and to feel the incredible wellness that only dance can achieve.

The mental and social benefits of involvement are huge and there is an absolute void to be filled by a company like Sage who obviously have a wonderful and imaginative choreographer who can extend and work with the dancers to achieve a challenging and fulfilling project for those performing, whilst taking dance to audiences who may not have been aware of the artistry and talent of this older generation.

It's not all poppin and lockin!

I am an ambassador for wellness and fitness for life and genuinely feel that there is a need for this idea to be rolled out across the country and for one should love to be able to assist in any way to facilitate this happening.

Elizabeth Jill Young (L.R.A.D, L.I.STD Modern Theatre, A.I.S.T.D Tap and National Branch, Equity member)

Thank you, Elizabeth, for taking the time to write such an impassioned letter. We'll get on to it and will definitely be in touch!

And do keep in touch with us. We need your feedback, critical comments, suggestions and encouragement to keep moving on and living up to that good old Sage mantra:

“You don't stop dancing because you get old. You get old because you stop dancing!”