



# HOTFOOT ONLINE



**One  
Dance**  
UK  
Supporting  
Dance

***MAPPING  
RESILIENCE***

***AUTUMN 2019***

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# FOREWORD

HOTFOOT takes 'resilience' as its theme for 2019. As I reflect on the various leadership positions that I have served across the arts industry, I realise that I have seen a lot of change and that has helped me to build resilience; an essential ingredient for leadership - particularly in the current climate!

One Dance UK has always led the way in advocating for dance and the emphasis of our work continues to be that of giving support to build resilience: empowering the workforce and providing a network for those looking to expand and develop.

As artists and creative leaders, we are constantly being affected by change, so it is how we manage it that is key. In order to push boundaries and break new ground, we need to grasp the principles that guide our practices. It is then that we transition from being leaders to agents of change; controlling and managing the change we want, reinventing, and remaining relevant and engaged. Staying connected with the networks and forums that One Dance UK provides can really help.

Special thanks to Dr. Bob Ramdhanie MBE for his contribution to HOTFOOT's Editorial Focus Group, as he steps down this autumn. The Editorial Focus Group, which included Bob and the recently passed Thea Nerissa Barnes (see page 46), is a strong pillar and key support to building on the success of past editions, giving voices to those in our sector. We are extremely grateful.

We hope you enjoy the articles we have selected for you, which go some way to show how managing change and sustaining resilience is key: no matter what part of the dance sector you're engaged with.

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**MERCY NABIRYE**

HEAD OF DANCE OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA



# WAX PRINT MEANING

This design was once given the name 'Nkrumah's Pencil', after Kwame Nkrumah, the first president of Ghana known for making strong comments and speeches both at home and worldwide; always with much thought given to what he said and wrote. Nkrumah's pencils were well sharpened, and his written words served as a weapon against any obstacle in his way. These words, taken from [Vlisco](#), metaphorically embrace the importance of documentation, legacies and constantly "sharpening your saw" in order to remain resilient.

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One Dance UK supports the practice of dance of the African Diaspora, with the aim to make the form visible and valued as part of the British cultural experience

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# WELCOME

**Ngiyabonga kakhulu** Thank you very much to One Dance UK for the opportunity to write the welcome address for the Autumn 2019 edition of HOTFOOT Online.

**Sanibonani** Welcome to you, the readers of HOTFOOT. This is a timely publication which includes the DAD Mapping Report from One Dance UK, forming the major focus for this particular edition. In the current climate of political uncertainty, it is even more necessary for us in the dance industry to have a strong sense of our sector so we can work together for the benefit of our artform!

**Indaba** The matters captured by this issue show the diverse topography of dance of the African Diaspora landscape; Kamara Gray has written an article on jazz dance; Tiah Parsan speaks to those in the hip hop and street dance community; there is a suggested methodology for working with African dances by Talawa Dance Ensemble to assist dance makers when working with African dance practices that are considered traditional; and there is the unearthing of hidden histories such as that of Raven Wilkinson who paved the way in the U.S.A. for African American ballerinas such as Misty Copeland.

**Hambani kahle** Go Well to our readers and our writers. And, especially our ancestors who move through us when we dance.

---

**DR. SARAHLEIGH CASTELYN**  
(READER IN PERFORMING ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF  
EAST LONDON)  
EDITORIAL FOCUS GROUP MEMBER

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# MAPPING DANCE AFRICAN DIA





# 21 E OF THE ASPORA

**"MOVEMENT IS THE  
FIRST LANGUAGE  
THAT WE LEARN"**

JONZI D

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**A.**

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank individuals and various dance organisations that have supported our mapping research project and the production of this report. Thanks to those who participated in our surveys, regional focus groups, consultation with community dance collectives, one on one and small groups, as well as interviews with non-DAD dance specific organisations including Arts Council England.

**B.**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

We are delighted to present this report mapping the dance of the African Diaspora (DAD) sector. Over several months, we talked to practitioners and organisations within and outside the sector to gain a clear idea of what DAD looks like today, and what is required to secure its future. The picture that emerges from this mapping is of a sector that has grown over the past five years, is dynamic but nevertheless still faces growth challenges and needs. The emergence of contemporary styles, and in particular, 'African Contemporary' as dominant forms in the sector is a striking area for debate about how the styles labelled outside of this category are supported. The positive developments noted here include the increased visibility of the sector overall, and the widening of opportunities that have come to the sector as a result of a successfully argued case for more funding and focus on diversity in the arts.

Nevertheless, funding remains the greatest priority for practitioners, in particular the opportunity to gain skills and knowledge on how to access funding. The need to enhance the skills base for funding the sector is underscored by the low numbers of practitioners who work directly on funding, and the related area of audience development. For many in the sector, the call to legacy, and ensuring the sector has a place in national and cultural memory is a key message that emerges from this mapping exercise; an area where it is expected that new technology can be harnessed to make the knowledge and archives of the sector accessible to all. It points to the strongest outcome of this mapping exercise, that the DAD sector has much to offer both the UK and the world if the key areas of legacy, funding and networks can be harnessed. We have only scratched the surface and we look forward to rising to that challenge.

## C.

# METHODOLOGY

The Mapping Dance of the African Diaspora (DAD) project took place in phases conducted by the DAD team at One Dance UK, namely Mercy Nabirye, Head of DAD; and regional programmers Heather Benson, Katy Noakes and Oluwatoyin Odunsi. The research methods included both qualitative and quantitative approaches, with focus groups, semi-structured interviews, surveys, as well as questionnaires for a segment of participants. The research took place over months covering a wide-ranging area geographically and engaging over 100 participants. The knowledge of the DAD team informed the way focus groups were conducted and enabled a fluid interaction to map the needs, challenges, as well as future aspirations of the sector. The mapping exercise involved the following activities:

- A survey disseminated to 180 participants via SurveyMonkey. The survey questions were designed by the Dance of the African Diaspora team and took place in two rounds – the first round, garnering 154 responses took place from August 2017 to December 2017. The second round of the survey took place between December 2018 to March 2019.
- A total of five focus groups were conducted with a variety of practitioners, funders and cultural producers: two in London, two covering the North (Leeds) and Midlands (Leicester) respectively and one in the South West (Bristol). These focus groups took place between April and July 2018.
- Interviews were conducted with several participants on an individual basis, as well as with individuals representing organisations to gain insight into the individual perspectives of practitioners within the sector. These took place from July to October 2018, with further consultations between February and March 2019. Between April and May 2018, 14 out of 42 alumni on the DAD Trailblazers Professional Development Fellowship, responded to an additional questionnaire which was designed to elicit the views of these key participants based on their expertise and commitment to the sector as alumni trailblazers for DAD. The majority of the 42 alumni were also participants of the regional focus groups.

## D.

# ABOUT THE SECTOR

### 1. DANCE IN THE WIDER CREATIVE ECONOMY

Dance is a key part of the UK's wider creative economy and cultural sector – an area of the UK's economy which contributes £77bn in value, an equivalent of 5.0% of the country's economy.<sup>1</sup> A Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sports report (DCMS) estimates that the sector grew by 9.9% in 2013, higher than

other sectors, and employs over one million people. It is one of the economic sectors in which the UK's performance is acknowledged as world class. One Dance UK, the UK's national body for dance, estimates that the dance sector employs around 30, 000 people<sup>2</sup>, while the Arts Council England's "Dance Mapping" report puts the figure at around 40, 000 people. It occupies a unique space in the sector by virtue

<sup>1</sup> Enriching Britain: Culture, Creativity and Growth (2015 Report by the Warwick Commission on the Future of Cultural Value, Pg.12)

<sup>2</sup> Movement Beyond Borders, The UK Dance Sector Outlook on Brexit, August 2018

of being both a cultural and physical activity offering distinct opportunities for integrated engagement for young people and communities through education and community participation. A key issue for dance as a source of economic activity is that while the sector has been able to attract increased levels of funding overall, the sector remains one in which

**“VERY TALENTED PEOPLE ARE PREPARED TO WORK FOR VERY LITTLE MONEY. HISTORICALLY, DANCERS HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO COMMAND LARGE SALARIES BECAUSE OF PRESSURE ON FUNDING, FROM ALL SOURCES, RECEIVED BY THE SECTOR”.**

The phenomenon of “highly skilled, low waged” workers is not unique to dance, but is a key challenge for the sector. The authors of the Arts Council’s Dance Mapping report (2004-2008) noted that *“the dance field is not exploiting its assets as fully as it could. The repertoire is not currently valued and intellectual property is not capitalised upon. Neither is our position as a world leader in certain types of practice: for example, youth and community dance are well ahead of the rest of the world”*.<sup>3</sup> One of the key challenges for dance concerning other art forms has been the difficulty of establishing its permanence, in contrast to other art forms

such as film, music, and literature which benefit from the relative ease with which their output can be industrially reproduced, and mass produced. The challenge of existing in a globally competitive creative economy whilst retaining and capitalising on the best of Britain’s cultural and creative assets is one that the dance sector shares with all other areas of the country’s creative economy. This challenge is also a potential area for growth, a potential which the Dance of the African Diaspora sector epitomises through its long tradition of links to Africa, the world’s fastest growing continent, alongside the UK, Europe and the Americas. Dance of the African Diaspora has a long history in the UK, and in the past two decades, the sector has developed in numerous ways, part of which is the subject of this report.

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN ORGANISATION TO REPRESENT ITS INTERESTS, I.E. THE ASSOCIATION OF DANCE OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA (ADAD) ESTABLISHED IN THE 1990S, WAS A LANDMARK DEVELOPMENT FOR THE SECTOR; DESPITE CONTROVERSIES, THE PRINCIPLE OF A REPRESENTATIVE BODY FOR THE SECTOR REMAINED WHEN ADAD MERGED WITH DANCE UK, YOUTH DANCE ENGLAND AND NATIONAL DANCE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION TO FORM ONE DANCE UK.**

## 2. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW - DANCE OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA

The first recorded Black Dance company in the UK was Ballets Negres established by Berto Pasuka in the 1940s. The company ethos was forged from Pasuka’s training in ballet which he fused with the spirited techniques of African-Caribbean dance. The company had some success but closed due to a lack of subsidy; in

its heyday, it employed an international cohort of dancers including a Trinidadian, a German, Guyanese, two Jamaicans and a Ghanaian. The company’s drumming corps were Nigerian, part of a strong and ongoing influence of West Africa in the UK’s dance traditions. Pasuka’s influence was enduring, and some of the dancers in his company such as Elroy Josephs went on to become inspirational figures in British dance, maintaining the practice of

<sup>3</sup> Dance Mapping: A Window on Dance, 2004-2008

fusing varied dance cultures that has become a strong characteristic of the dance of the African diaspora.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, there has also been a strong focus on presenting African dance forms in their original mould of folk traditions, and this was the spirit of companies such as Adzido, founded in 1984, which focused on presenting the repertoire of traditional African dances to UK audiences. The company was founded at a time when the UK's racial and ethnic relations were fractious, but minority communities were increasingly assertive in seeking representative diversity in the arts and broader public life. Many other notable companies include Irie! dance theatre, founded in 1984, and Phoenix Dance Company founded in 1981.<sup>5</sup> That company had a strong impact on the development of artists such as Jonzi D and his desire to study contemporary dance and subsequently found the Breakin Convention Festival, which brought the dance culture of Hip-Hop onto the UK stage. The 90s was also a period of high immigration from the African continent into the UK, bringing with it cultural practitioners who had an interest in developing African dance forms in the context of the 20th century. This was the influence behind the establishment of Badejo Arts by Peter Badejo in the early nineties and operation in the early 2000s; A company established to focus with a broad remit but drawing on the Yoruba cultural heritage of its founder with a notable impact on the sector.

Among Badejo's proteges was Dr Funmi Adewole who has established a reputation as one of the leading authorities on the dance of the African diaspora. In an interview with The Guardian newspaper she recalls the early 90s as a period when:

***"THERE WERE MANY DIFFERENT COMPANIES AND STYLES; THERE WERE FORUMS FOR DEBATE, INITIATIVES SUCH AS THE BLACK DANCE DEVELOPMENT TRUST IN BIRMINGHAM AND PETER BADEJO'S BAMI JO SUMMER SCHOOL. THERE WAS A SENSE OF RECOGNITION OF THE NEED TO SUPPORT BLACK ARTISTS, BOTH BY INSTITUTIONS AND THE GRASSROOTS."***

Indeed, following the 1960s "Commonwealth arts" and 1970s "minority arts" movements, the more culturally assertive 1980s saw a real upsurge in activity, with a proliferation of companies drawing on and experimenting with different styles and techniques: African and Caribbean dance forms, popular and jazz dance, classical and contemporary. The sector has had its share of tumultuous developments, notably the withdrawal of Arts Council England's funding from Adzido and other companies, which led to a decline in the profile of the sector. However, this moved many of the companies that continued to exist, away from the performance of Dance of the African Diaspora as traditional repertoire to more experimental and contemporary interpretations of African dance traditions.

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<sup>4</sup> Subject Guide: Black British Dance, Black Cultural Archives, undated

<sup>5</sup> How black dancers brought a new dynamism to British dance, The Guardian, September 2013

### 3. TIMELINE OF KEY HISTORICAL MOMENTS - ADAD PERSPECTIVE

**1994** The Association of Dance of the African Diaspora (ADAD) established to move dance of the African Diaspora 'from the margins to the mainstream of British dance'. The organisation produced choreographic platforms and debates, raising the profile of the art-form and encouraging critical debate about its development. 1st printed Newsletter and HOTFOOT Magazine launched

**1999** ADAD's first publication 'Black Dance in the UK – Articles and Interviews' was released.

**2003** ADAD enters a strategic alliance with Dance UK, securing regular funding from Arts Council England.

Launch of Trailblazers, ADAD's annual professional development fellowship. Alumni to date 42 artists supported to develop their practice and raise their profiles.

**2005** HOTFOOT relaunches as a quarterly e-magazine distributed online. Current international readership in thousands.

**2006** ADAD's Heritage project Photographic Exhibition 'Moments' launches at the Theatre Museum in Covent Garden. The exhibition later toured to Leicester, Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds and Bristol. by 2017 it reached an audience footfall of over 60,000.

**2007** Second publication, Voicing Black Dance is published to complement the photographic exhibition 'Moments'.

**2008** Launch of 'Open Stage' - A platform for artists DAD work in progress and 'safe space' for professional feedback

**2009** Launch of the biennial Bloom Festival at Southbank Centre in London.

**2010** ADAD North Pilot established. Based at Phoenix Dance Theatre this project focused on developing the profile of DAD artists in the North.

Launch of the Biennial Re:generations International conference in partnership with IRIE! dance theatre, London Metropolitan University

**2011** ADAD exits the strategic alliance with Dance UK, establishing independent governance and management structures and achieving charitable status.

Bloom becomes a National Festival to include events across UK regions. By 2017 Bloom as a festival within festivals across the UK reached over 20,000 people.

ADAD South West established with a programmer based in Bournemouth, delivering projects and events across the region.

Inaugural ADAD Lifetime Achievement Award presented to Jackie Guy MBE. Biennial Awards follow to Peter Badejo OBE (2013), Beverley Glean MBE (2016), Maxine Brown (2018) and State of Emergency Productions. Follow up events were in London, Bournemouth, Birmingham and Salford.

**2012** ADAD becomes a part of the Arts Council England's National Portfolio of funded organisations for 2012-15.

**2016** ADAD merges with Dance UK, Youth Dance England (YDE), and National Dance Teachers Association (NDTA) to form One Dance UK - The Sector Support UK body for Dance.

**2019** One Dance UK and BBC Arts partner to launch the first '#DancePassion', a digital dance festival and national celebration of dance, which included a digitised version of the Black Dance / DAD Photographic Exhibition 'Moments' archives, engaging millions nationally.

One Dance UK moves to Birmingham - Dance Hub

## E.

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# FINDINGS AND OUTCOMES: WHAT THE SECTOR LOOKS LIKE IN 2019

### 1. DEFINITIONS OF DANCE OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA & THE CHALLENGE OF CONTEMPORARY DANCE

A key impetus for this project has been to understand the complexity and challenge of defining the sector and its practice from the perspective of practitioners; for many engaged in the research the definition of Dance of the African Diaspora starts from Africa as either source, a cultural reference point or point of origination. Despite a variety of nuances, this relationship to the African continent is a constant in defining which practices 'belong' to the sector. DAD is a practice that keeps African practitioners connected with their culture. The other significant level is as a cultural product, an influential and dominant constituent of western and global popular culture. The term 'Dance of the African Diaspora' is firmly identified with the organisation that is now part of One Dance UK. The various ways this interpretation plays out is most striking in the words of a selection of DAD Trailblazers Fellowship Alumni participants.

### PERSON-CENTRED

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**"DANCE AS AN AFRICAN PERSON IS WHAT I DO WITH TAVAZIVA DANCE. IT FOCUSES ON AFRICA, THE INSPIRATION IS FROM AFRICA, A FUSION OF CONTEMPORARY DANCE AND ZIMBABWEAN DANCE"**

**BAWREN TAVAZIVA, TRAILBLAZERS FELLOW, 2003-2004**

### CULTURAL INHERITANCE/ HISTORICAL MEMORY/ANCESTRAL CONNECTION

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**"TO ME DANCE OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA IS THE MOVEMENT THAT HELPS ME IDENTIFY WITH THE CULTURE I'VE INHERITED AS WELL AS THE ONE I LIVE IN. THESE ARE THE DANCES THAT TELL STORIES OF THE MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE FROM PLACE TO PLACE."**

**IRIS DE BRITO, TRAILBLAZERS STARTER, 2017-2018**

### GEOGRAPHIC

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**"DANCE OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA (DAD) ARE DANCES AND DANCE TRADITIONS THAT WERE BIRTHED IN AFRICA THAT HAVE TRAVELLED AND BEEN TRANSPORTED GLOBALLY. AS THESE DANCES AND DANCE TRADITIONS HAVE BEEN TRANSPORTED, THEY HAVE EVOLVED AND INSPIRED DANCE FORMS INTERNATIONALLY. AFRICAN AND CARIBBEAN TRADITIONAL DANCE, DANCEHALL, LINDY HOP, JAZZ-FUNK, HOUSE DANCE, TAP DANCE AND HIP-HOP DANCE ARE ALL EXAMPLES OF DANCE OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA"**

**VICKI IGBOKWE, TRAILBLAZERS CHAMPION, 2012-13**



## HETEROGENOUS & INFLUENTIAL

**"I SEE AFRICAN CULTURE AND DANCE PRESENT AND PERMEATED IN WESTERN CULTURE PRETTY MUCH IN EVERYTHING. SO, I FIND IT HARD TO SPECIFY WHAT IT IS DAD EXACTLY AS I ASSUME IMPLICITLY THAT IT IS PART OF OUR CULTURE. IN RECENT COLONIAL EUROPEAN HISTORY, I THINK DAD IS DANCE THAT HAS AT ITS ROOTS INFLUENCES OF AFRO DIASPORA ORIGIN BUT IF YOU TAKE THE PERSPECTIVE THAT THE FIRST HUMAN CAME FROM AFRICA YOU COULD ARGUE THAT IT HAS INFLUENCED EVERYTHING."**

*JEAN ABREU, TRAILBLAZERS FELLOW, 2003-2004*

## CULTURAL PRODUCT/PRACTICE

**"I THINK IT'S BEST DESCRIBED AS THE DANCE STYLES AND CULTURE DEVELOPED AND CREATED BY PEOPLE OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA. BUT IT'S IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT THIS IS BOTH CONCERNING ITS HISTORY AND IT'S EVER-CHANGING AND EVOLVING FUTURE."**

*JAMAAL BURKMAR, TRAILBLAZERS STARTER 2017-2018*

## INSTITUTIONAL

**"IT IS AN ORGANISATION THAT SUPPORTS THE PRACTICE AND SUSTAINABILITY OF DANCE THAT HAVE ROOTS WITHIN AFRICAN CULTURE."**

*NATHAN GEERING, TRAILBLAZERS STARTER, 2015-16*

The most prominent definition of practice from this report's survey is "African Contemporary". Over 50% of respondents identified this as their main practice or a constituent of their main practice. This was followed by over 20% of practitioners who identified African dance as their main practice, followed by 20% who identified their main practice as "Contemporary" – all in all over 90% of practitioners identified "African", "Contemporary" and "African Contemporary" as part of their practice. The other styles were identified as part of their practice by a small number of practitioners, nevertheless a wide variety of styles were identified – including: Jazz, Modern, Tap, Dancehall, West African, Black, Afro-Brazilian and Afro-Cuban. There are certainly overlaps in definition between the most practiced styles and some of these styles, though, the last four categories, in particular (West African, Black, Afro-Brazilian and Afro-Cuban) maybe subsumed under the broader heading of African dance. However, the differences are significant enough that a difference in attitude to these styles is perceived by practitioners. This poses a challenge particularly for those artists and organisations who do not or are not willing to 'fit' into what is defined as contemporary, or whose artistic tradition do not easily fit into this definitional space. The understanding of what is Dance of the African Diaspora is wide – and inclusive, however there are strong perceptions of variations in what styles are highly valued, supported and practiced within the sector. Other styles are over-shadowed and marginalised by what is identified as "Contemporary". It is implied that this marginalisation has both social and economic consequences for artists who do not or are not willing to 'fit' into what is defined as contemporary. It is worth noting that in the last major survey of the dance sector (Burns 2004-2008) for the Arts Council England, virtually all dance styles practiced in the United Kingdom were subsumed under the title of "Contemporary" dance, indicating that there is a wider sectoral pressure for practitioners of DAD to conform or mould their practices towards 'Contemporary' styles. There is certainly a desire from artists to preserve the authenticity of their particular styles and have access to resources that are perceived to flow towards styles that fit within the dominant "Contemporary" dance model. This is particularly a concern from a programming perspective – where gatekeepers are seen as ill equipped to understand and appreciate work outside of the 'Contemporary' dance aesthetic.

## 2. FIVE YEARS: PERSPECTIVES ON GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE SECTOR

### LONDON

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The growth of the sector over the past five years is seen as strongly related to the growth of DAD as or within an organisation (ODUK), particularly in London. The organisation's work in networking the sector through events across the country and nurturing artists and their practice were foregrounded in identifying how the sector has developed. The emphasis on promoting the sector and its styles as a distinctive area of personal and professional development through its events and awards programme was highlighted strongly. The organisation's influence on talent development and access to opportunities is also identified as a notable development for the sector. Among the programmes of DAD that are identified as part of the development of the sector are:

- The Trailblazers Professional Development Fellowship Programme
- Events and Awards
- Re: generations International Conference

For most respondents, the sector has become more visible in terms of access to audiences and integration into the wider dance sector. A further aspect of perceived growth is an emphasis on the contemporary, alongside an expansion of formal training. A further positive growth development has been a growing recognition of styles and genres that can be included under the DAD sector and the expansion of this into a network of practitioners, with hip-hop, and especially Afrobeats music and dance as elements that

have led to an increase in youth interest in DAD. The impact of digital communication tools was noted as broadening access to new audiences. They noted that dance overall has gained greater visibility, but this is form dependent. A notable development in London is a growth in sectoral capacity through generous funding from the Arts Council England directed towards One Dance UK and a handful of organisations that were included in their National Portfolio of regularly funded organisations. This is seen as categorically driven by the successful advocacy for diversity in the cultural sector which has motivated venues to find and support choreographers and dancers from diverse backgrounds.

#### **Challenges:**

That said, some respondents identified negative development in the sector. The lack of established companies in the sector to look up to was noted as an ongoing challenge. The definitional issues within the DAD sector was also identified as a point of stagnation; in tandem with this, despite the plethora of styles available, there is a lack of connection between different dance forms and a wider lack of collaboration between practitioners in the sector. In tandem with this, respondents identified the 'erasure' of heritage and legacy as a problem for the sector. That needs to be addressed by connecting it to legacy and historical studies. While many feel the sector is more visible, there is a sense that African people in the sector are not visible or perhaps marginalised within the sector. Furthermore, the sector has shrunk in terms of publicly funded provision for Community and Youth Programming. In the regions outside of London, the sector has grown more unevenly:

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### NORTH & MIDLANDS:

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Overall, the perception was that the North had regressed as a region concerning the practice of Dance of the African diaspora. There is a distinct lack of visibility, though there are individuals who have prominence in the sector. The trailblazers programme as a national programme is identified as a signal of positive growth. The presence of African dance classes by individual artists delivering independent dance classes is

identified as a positive development, though mostly dependent on artists independently hiring venues. The absence of DAD in artistic programmes is identified as a point of stagnation or negative growth. In the Midlands, similar to other regions, the presence of ODUK/DAD has been seen as a positive growth development, in particular, ODUK/DAD's role in developing the sector alongside the presence of National Portfolio Organisations is seen as a positive development. The use of technology to share information has helped

the sector broaden access to audiences. The rapid growth of particular organisations in particular Serendipity and their LDIF festival (Lets Dance International Frontiers) is seen as a positive development. However, overall, the perception was that the sector is struggling to grow, and there is an overall lack of support for DAD practitioners which makes continuing or returning to the sector difficult.

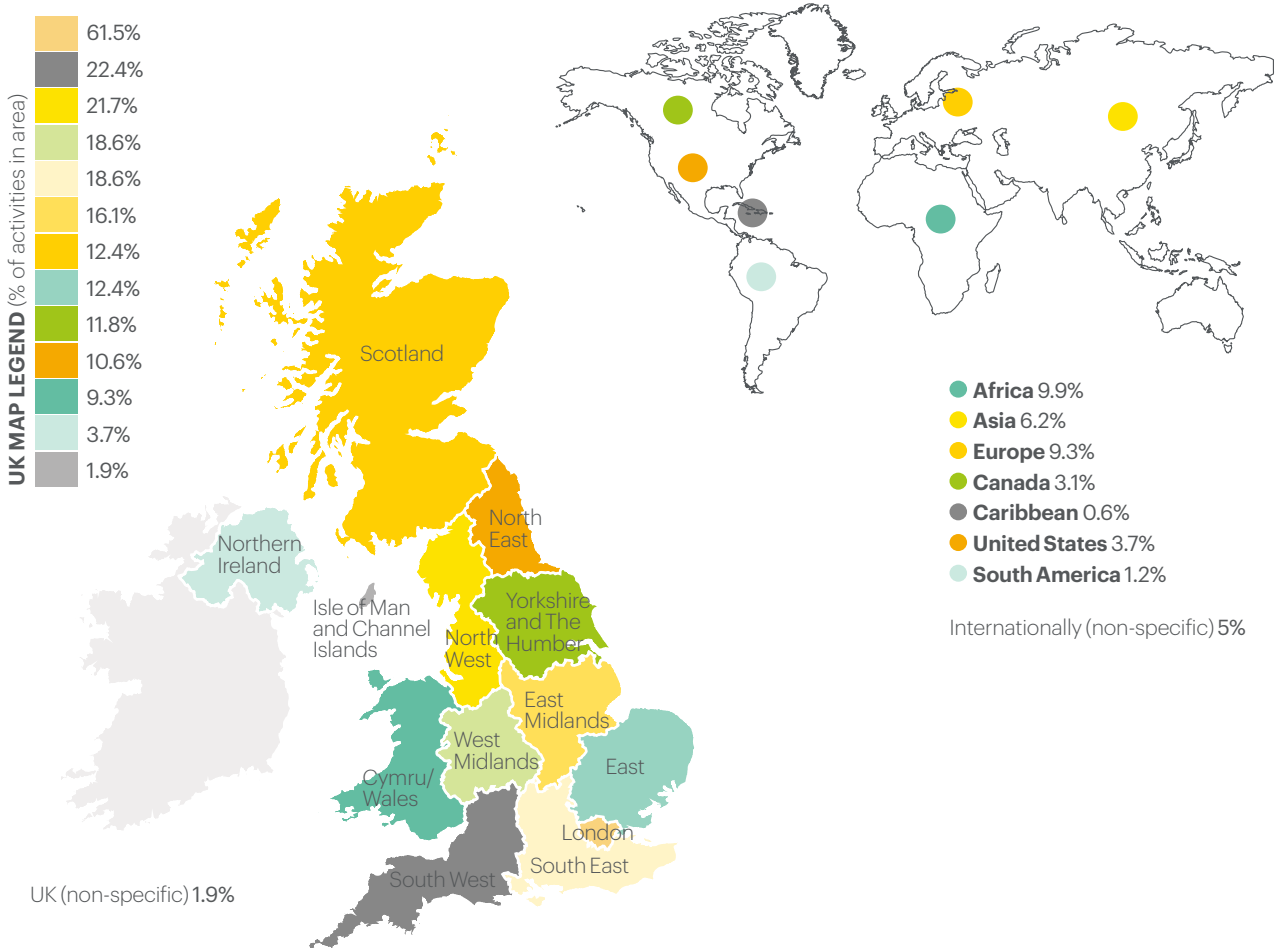
SOUTH WEST

In the south west, the geographic spread of the region is perceived as a challenge to the growth and development of DAD. Respondents perceived the sector as more vibrant five years ago and identified that part of this negative development is that the South of England National Portfolio organisations no longer exist. The profile of artists is not stable which makes it difficult to establish momentum for the sector. On the positive development, the input of DAD/ODUK into the area is identified as positive; as are the growth of hip-hop artists experimenting within DAD sector, and there is interest in the sector as both a cultural experience and an art form.

3. STATISTICAL SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

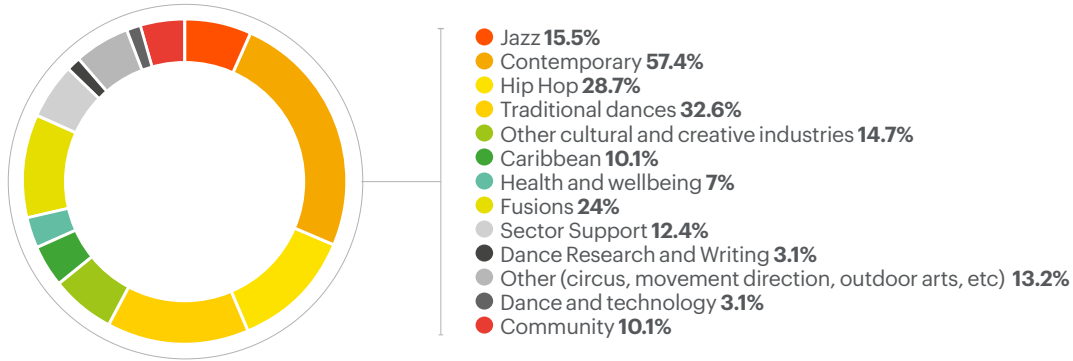
LOCATION OF WORK

\*OUT OF 161 RESPONSES



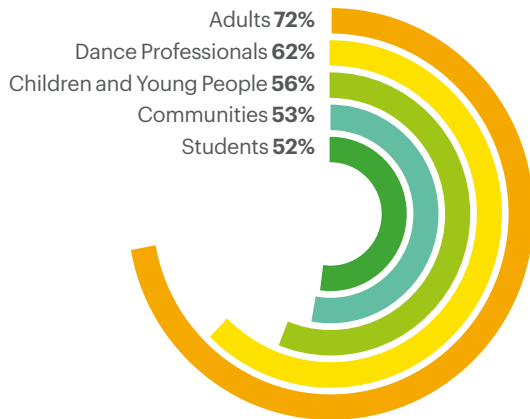
**TYPE OF DANCE PRACTICE**

\*OUT OF 129 RESPONSES



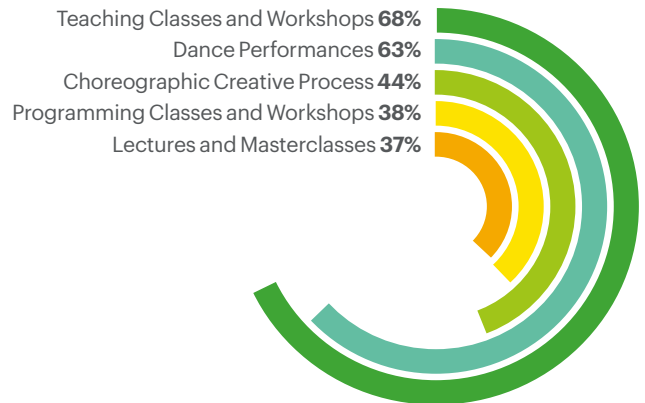
**CORE CLIENTS**

\*OUT OF 143 RESPONSES



**SERVICES PROVIDED TO THEIR CLIENTS**

\*OUT OF 146 RESPONSES



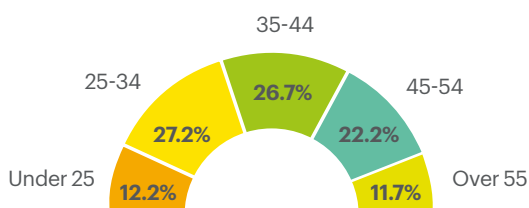
**WHERE THEY PROVIDE THESE SERVICES**

\*OUT OF 139 RESPONSES



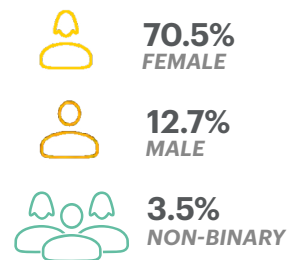
**AGE**

\*OUT OF 180 RESPONSES



**GENDER**

\*OUT OF 173 RESPONSES



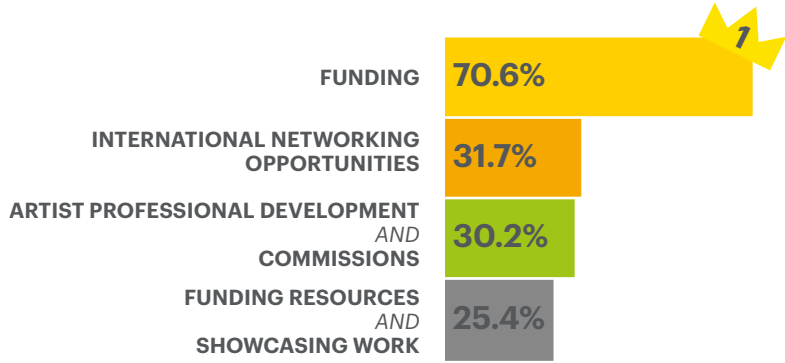
**PRIORITISED NEEDS FOR SUPPORT TO CONTINUE THEIR PRACTICE**

\*OUT OF 126 RESPONSES

THESE NEEDS WERE SELECTED THE MOST AT EACH RANKING OF 1(HIGHEST) TO 5(LOWEST)

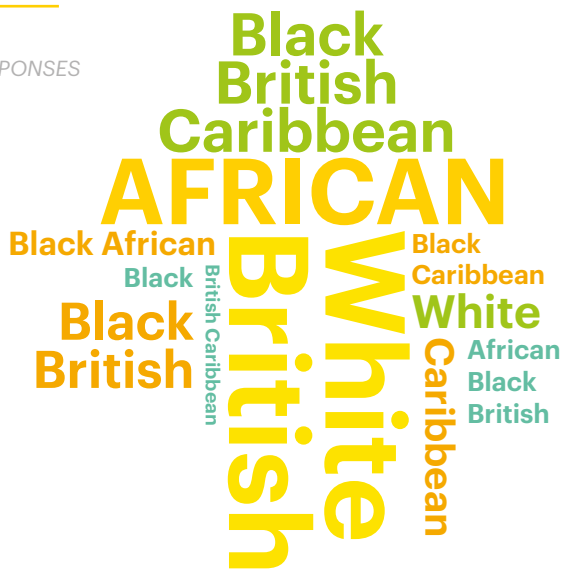
- 1 **FUNDING** 41.3%
- 2 **FUNDING, THEN FUNDING RESOURCES** 13.5%, then 8.7%
- 3 **SHOWCASING WORK** 7.9%
- 4 **COMMISSIONS** 8.7%
- 5 **INTERNATIONAL NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES** 8.7%

OVERALL MOST PRIORITISED ACROSS 1 TO 5 RANKINGS



**ETHNICITY**

\*OUT OF 173 RESPONSES



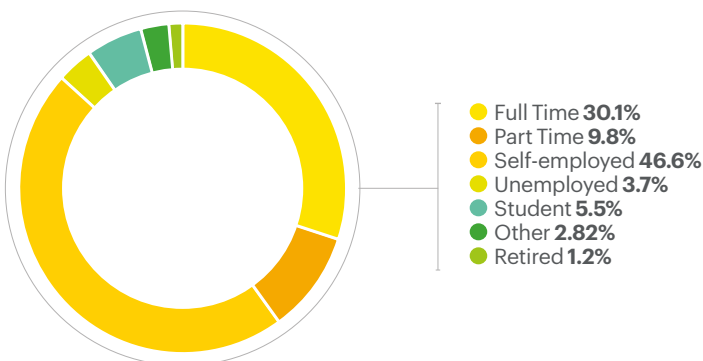
**DISABILITY**

\*OUT OF 173 RESPONSES



**EMPLOYMENT STATUS**

\*OUT OF 163 RESPONSES



**YEARS OF WORK IN THE DANCE SECTOR**

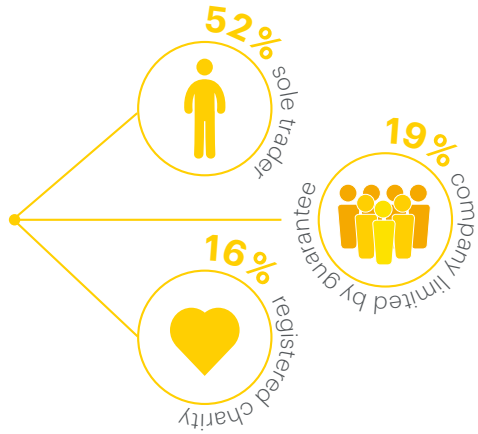
\*OUT OF 163 RESPONSES



RANGE OF TIME	QUANTITY
Less than 5 years	19.6%
5 to 10 years	11.7%
10 to 20 years	29.4%
20 to 25 years	16.6%
25 to 30 years	12.3%
30 to 40 years	6.7%
40 to 50 years	3.1%
50 plus	0.6%

**ENTITY**

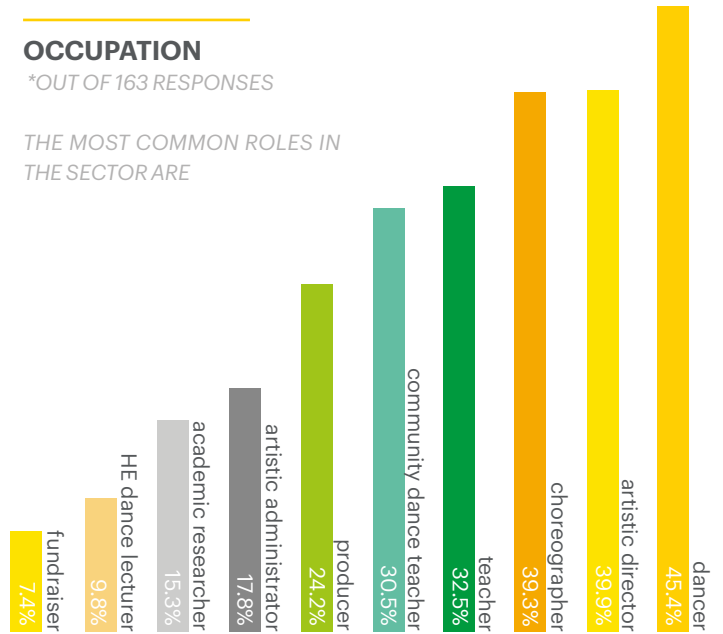
\*OUT OF 139 RESPONSES



**OCCUPATION**

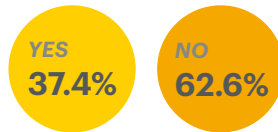
\*OUT OF 163 RESPONSES

THE MOST COMMON ROLES IN THE SECTOR ARE



**MEMBER OF ONE DANCE UK**

\*OUT OF 123 RESPONSES



**4. ORGANISATIONS IDENTIFIED AS SUPPORTING DAD SPECIFICALLY**

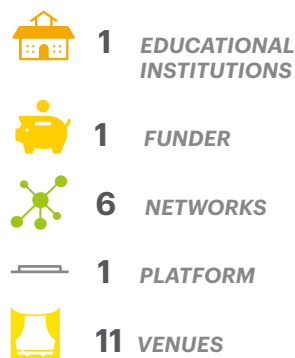
A range of organisations were identified as supporters of the sector; the largest number of these were venues and culture spaces, but

also notable are a healthy number of networks and members associations within the dance sector; strikingly only one funding body, the Arts Council England was identified as supporting the sector. Across the regions, the organisations broke down as follows:

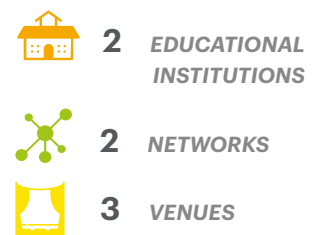
**IN LONDON**



**IN THE MIDLANDS**



**IN THE NORTH**



5. PERSPECTIVES ON THE SECTOR: SELECTED STATEMENTS FROM CONSULTATION AND INTERVIEWS

**"WE NEED TO EMPOWER OUR ARTISTS AROUND NAVIGATING THE INDUSTRY – WE NEED AN ORGANISATION LIKE "EQUITY" FOR DANCERS SO THEY CAN MAINTAIN THEIR AGENCY, ACCESS RESOURCES AND GET SUPPORT. THE SECTOR ITSELF NEEDS BROADENING TO CONNECT WITH OTHER GENRES SUCH AS THEATRE, MUSICALS AND FILM. IT HAS CERTAINLY DEVELOPED EXPONENTIALLY, THERE ARE MORE BLACK PEOPLE ON STAGE AND MORE TALENTED BLACK BODIES IN THE SPACE."**

**JONZI D, MC AND FOUNDER, BREAKIN' CONVENTION**

**"THERE IS A STRONG ENTREPRENEURIAL WORK ETHIC AND KEEPING RELEVANT IS A KEY ASPECT OF MAINTAINING PLACE IN THE HIP-HOP SECTOR, AS THE FORM KEEPS GROWING. AFRICAN DANCE IS ALIVE BUT NOT IN THE TRADITIONAL SENSE, THE YOUNG GENERATION FOR EXAMPLE ARE BEING ENGAGED WITH AFROBEATS. CULTURE HAS REMAINED STRONG AND I FEEL PROUD TO SEE PEOPLE I HAVE TAUGHT. I AM ENERGISED SEEING THIS NEW MOVEMENT HAPPEN"**

**MICKEY ASANTE, BOY BLUE ENTERTAINMENT**

**"THERE NEEDS TO BE A MORE RECOGNISED SENSE OF CAREER PROGRESSION, AND THERE NEEDS TO BE SUPPORT FROM BEGINNING TO THE END FOR DEVELOPMENT FOR PRACTITIONERS, IN A SENSE, "A SORT OF CLIMBING FRAME TO REACH THE TOP" THAT PROVIDES DIRECTION SO PEOPLE HAVE SOMETHING TO HOLD ON TO IN TERMS OF GUIDANCE, ADVICE, RESOURCING – FUNDING AND SPACE. THERE ARE ALSO ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES TO ADDRESS FOR EXAMPLE THE BLACK PERSPECTIVE IN THE CONTEXT OF HISTORICAL DISCRIMINATION. THE OVERALL TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT LANDSCAPE HAVE IMPROVED BUT WHEN DO YOU CALL YOURSELF A TRAINER VERSUS A DANCER WORKING IN DAD? THE UK'S PERSPECTIVE IS RECOGNISED AND SEEN AS IMPORTANT IN THE GLOBAL PLATFORM. THE ABILITY OF THE DANCER TO TELL A STORY IS THE GREATEST SKILL, BUT UK PRACTITIONERS DON'T KNOW HOW TO SELL IT TO THE WORLD. THE WORK NEEDS TO BE PUT IN TO IDENTIFY THE BLACK BRITISH STORY."**

**IVAN BLACKSTOCK, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, CRXSS PLATFXRM**

**"THERE IS STILL A NEED AND APPETITE FOR WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP. YOUNGER ARTISTS ARE WIDENING THE VISION AND EQUALLY ASSUMPTIONS. WE NEED TIME TO EXPOSE OURSELVES TO WHAT THE LANDSCAPE LOOKS LIKE. AS AN ORGANISATION WITH A PERFORMING COMPANY MODEL, WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO TAKE TIME TO EXPLORE OUR OWN ARTISTIC WORK, NOT JUST PROVIDE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT."**

**SRI DARKA, ZONATION**

**"THE RESEARCH BEING UNDERTAKEN GIVES DAD CREDIBILITY, ESPECIALLY FOR THOSE OUTSIDE OF DANCE; SO, DOES THE VISIBILITY OF DAD AT THE TOP OF THE ORGANISATION (ODUK). THERE SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE LEVERAGING OF ARTISTS ALREADY WORKING IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE ORGANISATION, AS THE ADVOCACY DEMONSTRATED BY DAD/ODUK IN PICKING ARTISTS TO CHAMPION AND SUPPORT IN ANY YEAR IS EFFECTIVE, AND THIS CAN CONTINUE TO HAPPEN WITHOUT ADDITIONAL RESOURCES. THIS SHOULD BE ARTIST-FOCUSED MUTUAL SUPPORT USING THE PUSH POWER OF THE ARTISTS, AND THE POWER OF ONE DANCE UK. ODUK SHOULD UTILISE ITS 'CONVENING' POWER TO BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER IN PROMINENT SPACES SUCH AS THE TATE AND SADLER'S WELLS. IT'S IMPORTANT TO CONTINUE TO STRESS THE NEED FOR UTILISING DIVERSITY AS A WAY TO ENGAGE PEOPLE IN SUPPORTING AND CONNECTING WITH THE WORK OF DAD PRACTITIONERS. THERE NEEDS TO BE MORE ENGAGEMENT WITH BUSINESS, FOR EXAMPLE LAW FIRMS AND BLACK-OWNED ENTERPRISES, TO FIND PEOPLE TO INVEST IN THE SECTOR."**

**VICKI IGBOKWE, CREATIVE DIRECTOR, UCHENNA DANCE  
JEANEFER JEAN-CHARLES, INDEPENDENT ARTIST**

**"THERE IS NO ONE WAY FOR PRACTITIONERS TO ENTER AND DEVELOP THEIR CAREERS; THERE ARE MANY ROUTES TO SUCCESS, AND DAD AS A SECTOR IS A BIG UMBRELLA. THE UNIVERSITIES HAVE BEEN FERTILE FOR SUPPORTING PRACTICE BUT ALSO GIVING ARTISTS WORK; THE DEVELOPMENT HAPPENS WHEN THERE ARE LESS WALLS BETWEEN SETTINGS."**

**JEANETTE BAIN-BURNETT, FORMER DIRECTOR, ADAD**

**"ON THE WHOLE, DAD PRACTITIONERS ARE MORE EXPLORATORY THAN DANCERS IN OTHER SECTORS; THERE IS A CONSTANT STRIVING TO FIND THEIR VOICE IN THEIR PRACTICE. DAD AS A SECTOR HAS HAD THE MOST DEVELOPMENT WITHIN 1989 - 1999; FOLLOWING THAT THE NEXT TEN YEARS WOKE THE SECTOR UP, AND IN THE RECENT TEN YEARS THE SECTOR HAS NOT FACED THE SAME CHALLENGES. THE ODUK PROGRAMME TRAILBLAZER HAS BEEN BENEFICIAL FOR DIVERSITY.**

**DAD PRACTITIONERS GO IN THE DIRECTION THAT IS RIGHT FOR THEM, AND MOVE IN AND OUT OF THE SECTOR, AND DEVELOP OTHER SKILLS TO DEVELOP CAREER THAT IS APPROPRIATE FOR THEM RATHER THAN WHAT IS SUBSCRIBED OR PRESCRIBED TO THEM. ODUK SHOULD NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE TRAILBLAZERS PROGRAMME, AS IT IS THE LAUNCHPAD AND CONFIDENCE BUILDER FOR MANY AN ARTIST. THE WORK BEING PRODUCED HAS TRACTION AND A GLOBAL PRESENCE, AND ALL EYES ARE ON DANCE. DAD PRACTITIONERS ARE NO LONGER ON THE FRINGES; THEY HAVE A PRESENCE AND THEY DON'T HAVE TO BE EXPLAINED I SPEAK ABOUT THEM. ALL THAT SAID, THERE IS A DECONSTRUCTION OF THE SECTOR HAPPENING AT A QUICK RATE. THE GAP IS GETTING WIDER. THERE IS A NEED FOR EMERGING PRODUCERS AND INDEPENDENT ARTISTS TO BE MENTORED BY ESTABLISHED PRODUCERS. THE RECRUITMENT OF DANCE STUDIES STUDENTS IN UNIVERSITIES REMAINS A CHALLENGE FOR THE SECTOR. THERE NEED TO BE MORE PATHWAYS INTO DANCE, AND DANCE IN SCHOOLS. IN RELATION TO FUNDING, THERE IS, IT SEEMS A LACK OF RESPECT AND UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT'S NEEDED FOR DANCE AT THE ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND; DESPITE THE FACT THAT DANCE DELIVERS ACROSS MOST OF THE ACE AGENDA MORE THAN MOST OTHER ART FORMS - AS A FORM, DANCE IS RESPECTED AND LOVED IN/ BY THE PUBLIC, BUT IT IS NOT BEING ADEQUATELY SUPPORTED BY THE INSTITUTIONS THAT SHOULD BE SUPPORTING IT."**

**JUNE GAMBLE, ARTS MANAGER AND DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANT**

**"THE SUPPORT NEEDED FOR DAD TO THRIVE INCLUDES, RELATIONSHIP BROKERS, TO NETWORK BLACK DANCERS NATIONALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY; ACCESS FOR ARTISTS TO SEE DIVERSE WORK AT FESTIVALS AND OTHER PLATFORMS; VENUES TO BE ACCESSIBLE FOR ARTISTS ENGAGEMENT. ARTISTS, PRACTITIONERS AND PRODUCERS NEED TO CHAMPION GOOD WORK, BUT THEY NEED NATIONAL ENDORSEMENT TO ADD WEIGHT."**

**DEBORAH BADDOO, SOE INDEPENDENT PRODUCER AND CONSULTANT**

**"WE NEED TO CONNECT THE GENERATIONS TO ENSURE A LEGACY - HOW AND WHERE THIS IS TO BE DONE IS AN URGENT MATTER FOR DISCUSSION. THE NEWER GENERATIONS NEED MENTORING AND THE ELDERS NEED TO BE CONVENED. THEIR WORK NEEDS TO BE MARKETED TO INCREASE THEIR VISIBILITY. THIS SHOULD INVOLVE VISUAL DOCUMENTATION OF THEIR WORK. THERE IS A UNIQUE AND DIVERSE LEGACY AND ARCHIVAL MATERIAL THAT ALREADY EXISTS IN VIDEO FORM, THOUGH WE NEED TO HAVE REALISM ABOUT SUCH A PROJECT AND WHAT THE OFFER IS TO THE SECTOR. THE PRESSURE OF FUNDING HAS MADE PRACTITIONERS LOSE INTEREST AND HOPE; DESPITE ONE OF US, HAVING LEFT THE SECTOR (JUDITH) TWICE, WE HAVE A SENSE OF UNFINISHED BUSINESS, AND THE DESIRE TO LEAVE A LEGACY AND PASS IT DOWN -AS WELL AS THE DESIRE TO BUILD ON SOMETHING, RATHER THAN START FROM SCRATCH IN NEW INDUSTRIES. THE REAL KEY NEEDS OF THE SECTOR ARE FACILITATING CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN THE GENERATIONS THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA, GIVING SUPPORTERS A LANGUAGE AND A TANGIBLE CASE FOR HAVING RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE DAD SECTOR, AND GETTING THE SECTOR TO FUNCTION AS A SINGLE ENTITY TO EMPOWER ARTISTS."**

**JUDITH PALMER, FORMER CHAIR ADAD, INDEPENDENT PRACTITIONER**

**JACKIE GUY MBE, DANCER AND CHOREOGRAPHER  
BEVERLY GLEAN MBE, IRIE! DANCE THEATRE**

#### CULTURE CENTRAL

**DAD AS A SECTOR HAS TICKED ALONG AND GROWN BY SMALL DEVELOPMENTS RATHER THAN LARGER ONES. THERE IS STILL A LACK OF INVESTMENT IN THE FORMS IN THE UK - THE SECTOR IS ALSO HAMPERED BY MARGINALISATION...THAT SAID, THERE ARE MORE BLACK DANCERS AND ORGANISATIONS AND ARTIST LEADERS ARE DEVELOPING ALONGSIDE A DANCE COMMUNITY. THIS IS A GOOD DEVELOPMENT BUT OF THESE DEVELOPING COMMUNITIES OR ORGANISATIONS NON HAVE A DAD FOCUS. BIRMINGHAM HAS AN UNDERSTANDING OF CONTEMPORARY DANCE BUT LITTLE ABOUT SUB GENRES. THERE SEEMS TO BE LACK OF CONFIDENCE, SKILLS AND AWARENESS AMONG PRACTITIONERS TO ACCESS OR APPLY FOR FUNDING. THE OTHER KEY CHALLENGES ARE VISIBILITY, THE LONGEVITY OF CAREERS IN THE SECTOR, AND THE UNDERSTANDING AND KNOWLEDGE FOR ARTISTS OF PROGRESSION ROUTES AND THE BREAD OF POSSIBILITIES FOR A CAREER IN DANCE.**

#### ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

**"ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND ALLOWS APPLICANTS TO DESCRIBE THEMSELVES - WE DON'T PRESCRIBE WHAT THE CRITERIA IS - THE NATIONAL PORTFOLIO WAS SHIFTED AND NOW SUPPORTING PRODUCING AND TOURING OF DIVERSE AESTHETICS - IT IS NOT SO MUCH FOCUSED ON SERVICE PROVIDERS LIKE IN THE 1980S. WE WOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHO ARE THE ARTISTS MAKING WORK THAT WE DO NOT KNOW? AND WHERE IS THIS WORK BEING SHOWN? WE HAVE PLATFORMS TO PROGRAMME BAME ARTISTS AND ENGAGE THEM IN COMMUNITY AND YOUTH PROGRAMMES. WE WANT TO UNDERSTAND THEIR PRACTICE TO APPROPRIATELY ENCOURAGE THE PITCH FOR THE MULTIPLE STRANDS OF INCOME AVAILABLE. WE NEED KNOWLEDGE TO MAKE THE CASE FOR THE WORK. THERE IS AN INEQUITABLE SPREAD OF DANCE ACROSS THE COUNTRY, WITH COMMUNITIES OF DANCE LACKING ACROSS THE REGIONS AND THAT HAS TO BE ADDRESSED."**



**DANCE UMBRELLA**

THE SECTOR NEEDS LEADERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP THAT "BREAKS THE CEILING". THE SECTOR CAN LEARN FROM AKRAM KHAN, AKASH AND OTHER SOUTH ASIAN DANCE COMPANIES. THERE IS A LACK OF VISIBILITY, BUT NOT THE SAME AS WHERE WE WERE 30 YEARS AGO. THE SECTOR COULD BE MAKING MORE NOISE AND GIVING AGENCY AND ROOM FOR TRUTHS TO DEVELOP. THERE IS A NEED FOR TRAINING OF DANCERS TO UNDERSTAND THE LANGUAGE NEEDED TO SUCCEED. THERE IS ALSO A NEED FOR ARTIST-LED TRAINING FOR DANCERS WORKING TO UNDERSTAND AND DANCE LIKE A SPECIFIC ARTIST, SO OFTEN, THE ARTISTS ARE NOT SAYING SPECIFICALLY WHO OR WHAT STYLES AND TECHNIQUES THAT THEY USE - IT ALL GETS THROWN UNDER CONTEMPORARY DANCE. THERE IS A GAP IN THE AMBITION AND QUALITY OF WORK, AND A SENSE OF ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE; FOR SOME ARTISTS THEY HAVE SUPPORT NEEDS THAT THEY ARE UNAWARE OF. WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS - THE PROGRAMMERS FOR RECOGNISING THE ARTISTS? CERTAINLY, THERE IS A NEED TO DEVELOP HOW WE GIVE ARTISTS FEEDBACK - IT TAKES SKILL TO DELIVER THIS AND WE NEED FOR A FRAMEWORK FOR THAT, AND PEER-TO PEER ASSESSMENTS.

**ROYAL AFRICAN SOCIETY**

THE TOP THREE ART FORMS THAT WE ENGAGE AUDIENCES WITH AROUND OUR WORK AND RESEARCH HAVE BEEN MUSIC, LITERATURE AND FILM. SOME OF THE CHALLENGES WE HAVE OBSERVED, IS THAT THE ENVIRONMENT OF CERTAIN SPACES, EITHER FOR COMMUNITY PRACTICE OR EVEN PROFESSIONAL SPACES ARE NOT OPEN FOR PUBLIC EXPERIENCE. THEY ATTRACT A CERTAIN TYPE OF PERSON. THERE IS A LACK OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND APPROACHABILITY FOR COMMUNITY PRACTICE. THERE IS A LOT OF GREAT WORK HAPPENING -YET ARTISTS DON'T HAVE THE SUPPORT OR INFRASTRUCTURE TO GET INTO THE SPACES THEY DESERVE TO BE IN. THERE IS A LACK OF PRODUCERS OR MANAGERS, SO ARTISTS HAVE TO DO IT THEMSELVES. AS AN ORGANISATION, FOR CAPACITY REASONS, WE CANNOT LOOK AT SECTORS BEYOND OUR REMITS OF LITERATURE AND FILM. WE WOULD ENCOURAGE ODUK/ THE DAD SECTOR TO PUSH VENUES FOR MONITORING THE PROGRAMMING AND PUSH FOR A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF BALANCE, AS WELL AS ENCOURAGING FESTIVALS TO PLATFORM ARTISTS THIS COULD BE AN INFRASTRUCTURE TO GET THE WORK SHOWCASED ON BROADER PLATFORMS.

**THE PLACE**

WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO EXPLORE AND EXPERIMENT WITH PARTNERSHIPS TO SUPPORT NEW ARTISTIC WORK TO REACH AUDIENCES NATIONALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY, BUT IT TAKES TIME TO SEE RESULTS. PERHAPS FOCUSING ON LESS FOR LONGER IS MORE EFFECTIVE.

**EDDIE NIXON, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, THE PLACE**

**SADLER'S WELLS**

"SADLER'S WELLS HAS TO BE PART OF THE DIASPORA AND IS BUILDING ITS OWN 'BEAST'. HIP HOP THEATRE IS MORE PROGRESSIVE IN THE UK VERSUS THE USA WHERE THERE IS MORE CONNECTION TO MUSIC. THE CULTURE HAS SHIFTED AND CHANGED AND IS FOCUSED ON CONTEMPORARY CONCERNS. THERE ARE TRACES AND ROOTS OF PIONEERS - AND THERE IS "A COMMUNITY OF SUPPORT AROUND THE ARTISTS BEYOND THE ART FORM ITSELF. THERE IS A COMMUNAL AWARENESS WITHIN HIP HOP THAT TRANSCENDS FINANCES, AND DOESN'T FEEL TIED TO INSTITUTIONS, WITH A SENSE THAT WORK CONTINUES REGARDLESS OF FUNDING. SADLER'S IS MOVING FORWARD IN PRESENTING MORE STORIES FROM MARGINALISED COMMUNITIES. WE DO STRUGGLE TO FIND ARTISTS AND PERFORMERS WHO ARE TRAINED TO DO THE WORK, AND WE ARE NOT SEEING ENOUGH VARIED AESTHETICS ON STAGE - SO COMMUNITIES AND PRESENTERS OF DAD NEED TO MAKE THE CHANGE HAPPEN."

**BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET (BRB)**

"WE ARE IN A PERIOD OF CHANGE AS AN INSTITUTION WITH A NEW ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, AND AMIDST THAT ORGANISATIONAL DIVERSITY IS A PRIORITY AND A CHALLENGE FOR US. THE WORK DAD IS DOING AND EXPLORING CHIMES WITH US AT BRB. WE ARE INTERESTED IN EXPLORING WHERE THE LINES COULD BE AND TALKING ABOUT THE PROFILE OF BLACK BALLET DANCERS. WE HAVE HAD SOME PROGRESS WITH PRINCIPAL DANCERS FROM BLACK BACKGROUND INCLUDING TYRONE SINGLETON, AND EDDIE NIXON FROM BRAZIL. WE HAVE DEVELOPED A PROGRAMME TO TRY AND IDENTIFY CHILDREN FROM BAME BACKGROUNDS, AND PROACTIVELY FIND TALENT THAT ARE BETWEEN (6-7) YEARS. A QUARTER OF THE TALENT ON THIS PROGRAMME ARE FROM DEPRIVED AREAS IN THE CITY. WE OFFER 3 MONTHLY BALLET CLASSES; THE CHALLENGE IS BRINGING PARENTS INTO IT. IN OUR 2ND YEAR, WE HAVE 15 WHO ARE FROM DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS, AND OUT OF THE COHORT OF 30 - 25 WERE FROM DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS. WE ARE INTERESTED IN HOW WE CAN WORK TOGETHER WITH ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND (DANCE AND MUSIC) TO MAKE THIS LINK, AND IT GOES BACK TO AN INDUSTRY WIDE ISSUE. WE ARE INTERESTED IN ENGAGING CONVERSATION SUCH AS RUNNING SESSIONS AT DAD SUMMERTIME CONVENTION. WE WANT TO BE TIED IN WITH DANCE OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA, BOTH WITH ARTISTS AND THE SECTOR. WE SEE THAT ARTISTS ARE FORCE FED BALLET AS A PURE FORM - BUT THERE'S AN IDENTITY CRISIS, ARTISTS DON'T ASK TO BE PUT IN A BOX. IN TERMS OF DAD AND BALLET, WE ASK WHY ISN'T DAD PART OF THAT CONVERSATION? WE ARE CERTAINLY INTERESTED IN THE POSSIBILITY FOR ODUK TO SUPPORT WORK IN PARTNERS BY SUGGESTING CHOREOGRAPHERS, COMPOSERS, DESIGNERS TO BE PART OF COMMISSION SLOTS FOR PROGRAMME."

## 6. ACHIEVEMENTS AND AWARDS

In his article for HOTFOOT Spring 2019 edition, Ramsay Burt, DeMontfort University writes: There are a growing number of people in the UK who have completed PhDs on research into dance of the African Diaspora, with 13 doctorates awarded since 2005. These have been on a variety of topics, including dance history, dance ethnography, and representations and aesthetics. Theses on the history of Black dancers in Britain include Bob Ramdhanie's 2005 thesis *African dance in England: spirituality and continuity* supervised at the University of Warwick, and 'Funmi Adewole's thesis *British Dance and the African Diasporas, the Discourses of Theatrical Dance and the Art of Choreography: 1985 to 2005* awarded this year at De Montfort University. In 2017 Sandie Bourne completed her PhD at the University of Roehampton on *Black British ballet: race, representation and aesthetics*. Ethnographic theses include Hélène Neveu Kringelbach's thesis *Encircling the dance: social mobility through the transformation of performance in urban Senegal*, University of Oxford 2005, and Sylvanus Kwashie Kuwor's

*Transmission of An-lo-Ewe dances in Ghana and in Britain 2013* from University of Roehampton. Some have written theses informed by their own practice as dance artists: Adesola Akinleye's *Body, Dance & Environment: an exploration of embodiment and identity* awarded in 2011 from Canterbury Christ Church University; Ama Sheron Wray in 2017 at University of Surrey completed *Towards embodiedology: modelling relations between West African performance practices, contemporary dance improvisation and "seselelame"*; and bringing dance, theology and popular culture in dialogue, 'H' Patten's thesis *The Spirituality of Reggae Dancehall Dance Vocabulary: a Spiritual, Corporeal Practice in Jamaican Dance* was awarded at Canterbury Christ Church University 2019. Most recent UK theses, including these, are available for download from <http://ethos.bl.uk> Additionally, a growing number of DAD artists and practitioners continue to be recognised with awards including The Queen's Birthday Honours for services to Dance, Lifetime Achievement Awards and others in the Theatre and Performing Arts Industry. Details are available online.

## F.

# EMERGING THEMES

### 1. VISIBILITY & PLATFORMS

Identifying the DAD sector as having achieved a high level of visibility in public perception was one of the key positive developments emerging in this mapping exercise; though a regional bias exists with the sector less visible in regions outside London. Traditional forms seem to receive less attention than contemporary forms. Practitioners with disabilities are also not visible within the sector. The question of visibility ties into some of the other emerging themes particularly archiving and preservation of legacy within the sector. Respondents across the

regions see digital platforms as both already having an impact on the increased visibility of the sector, and a tool to increase the visibility and reach of the sector. This is implied rather than explicit in the sector, but practitioners are seeking to be visible to a wide range of groups especially to Venue Programmers, Funders and Audiences. The concentration of children and young people as core clients has some implications for visibility – given that most practitioners are oriented towards community activity as opposed to artistic programming and profile.

## 2. SUSTAINABILITY

### 2a. Fundraising & Sustainability

The need for funding was one of the strongest responses to the mapping exercise – organisations serving the dance sector identify a skills gap in accessing funding, resulting in a lack of confidence and awareness of how to apply for and secure funding. The pressure on funding was identified as one factor that pushes some practitioners to leave the sector. It is also a potential driver of innovation, as practitioners express a desire for new business models that support funding; particularly in London where diversity-focused targets have enabled greater access to funding. The large arts funders, like Arts Council England are assumed as crucial to making sure the DAD sector thrives; one of the key issues raised by practitioners is that support needs to broaden from a focus on emerging artists to supporting artists with a mature vision. The survey results suggest that the profile of most practitioners’ clientele, typically young people, has implications for funding; only 1% of respondents work with audiences, by implication, adult and income-earning as their core clientele. The majority of respondents

identified funding as the key need in the sector at 56% when asked about their top priorities. There is a noticeable lack of professionals focused on funding. They made up less than 5% of those surveyed. It is not stated explicitly, but funding pressure seems to have two key impacts on the sector: in the form of:

- Practitioners exiting the sector
- Practitioners having to exercise over-flexibility to adapt to different demands

Nevertheless, the sector is open to collaboration with business and enterprise as a way of developing funding and earning income.

***“IT SEEMS THAT MOST OF THE DAD ARTISTS ARE ALWAYS ON THE DEVELOPING STAGE OF THEIR CAREER – I WOULD SAY RESOURCES AND YES FUNDING WILL HELP BUT THE SUPPORT OF ORGANISATIONS THAT WILL TAKE ON AN ARTIST/S WHOSE VISION THEY BUY INTO AND CAN SUPPORT UNTIL THIS ARTIST/ S ARE FULLY ESTABLISHED. THE MORE WE GENUINELY WORK TOGETHER THE STRONGER AND BETTER DAD SECTOR WILL BE” – LOLA ADODO***

## THE REGIONAL PICTURE

### LONDON

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Perhaps not surprisingly, the region with the least emphasis on funding as a challenge is London. The sector, in London, has benefitted from the successfully argued creative case for diversity. The challenges practitioners face seems to be concentrated in the area of skills and knowledge in accessing funding, as well as broader business leadership skills. The region’s respondents stressed a desire for:

- Strong support on how to access funding
- Funding that allowed artists and producers to take risks
- Knowledge of and access to alternative models of funding beyond the traditional sources.

### SOUTH WEST

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The picture in the South-West of England is strikingly different. The sector practitioners in the region are heavily reliant on schools as a source of income; there is however, a reported mismatch between the income practitioners expect to generate or are told is realisable and what is actually realised; in this region funding and resources to access funding are seen as key priorities, with a key desire for more engagement from:

- The Arts Council
- Local Authorities
- Arts Foundations

## MIDLANDS &amp; THE NORTH

Practitioners cited a strong desire for funding opportunities that encouraged collaboration rather than competition within the sector. A lack of funding emerges as a strong restriction on the ability of practitioners to network and engage in professional development activity. The current criteria of funders were cited as harming the Dance of the African Diaspora sector, though this is not elaborated, but a desire for more 'listening' to the sector from funders is stressed. The respondents here felt there was no clear strategy from the arts council in the north specifically towards the sector. Perhaps the most striking finding from this region is that a large proportion of funding is or is perceived to be directed towards early career activity. The sector, it was felt, would benefit from a shift or an increase in funding towards mid-career development including:

- Increased budget for contracting artists
- Practical support for making applications
- Knowledge of how to package the business of dance to organisations and institutions

**2b. Organisational Structures & Sustainability**

Majority practitioners in the sector (38%) are self-employed, which tallies with the fact that the most common structure in the sector is working as a sole trader (40%) or a variation of this, e.g. freelancer or independent. This may have implications for funding in the following ways:

- Practitioners potentially miss pools of funding by being sole entities rather than organisations.
- Practitioners lack the organisational resources to secure funding offers or opportunities for collaboration and partnerships that funders may have.

Funding and sustainability within the sector are not perceived as separate from the needs to develop an audience, but as a 'layer cake' – with the support of funding bodies and arts organisations crucial to enabling artists to develop craft and career, as well as take risks. The outcome of this support is strong and a marketable artistic product for audiences.

## ACROSS THE REGIONS

The consistent trend across the regions is a decline in opportunities for publicly funded work with schools, community and young people – where it does exist the incomes have fallen. This was cited as a concern in London, The North and the South-West:

- A strong desire for more knowledge and skills in accessing funding that already exists – and developing new sources of funding and sustainability.
- A strong desire for knowledge of new/non-traditional sources of funding – and new business models

**DANCE OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA: A RISKY BUSINESS?**

A concern that cuts across most of the themes emerging in this report is the misperception of 'Dance of the African Diaspora' as risky by and for funders, programmers and other gatekeepers. The sector's practitioners see this 'risk perception' as rooted in a lack of knowledge of the art form. There was a distinct sense that gatekeepers and programmers do not value the art forms and its requirements. This was partly seen as a sectoral issue, that requires more engagement in the form of educating audiences and audience development; in tandem with a focus on the issues of access, affordability, as well as embracing the entertainment or 'popularity' factor in presenting the art form or sector.

### 3. AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT

The sector faces significant challenges regarding audience development; practitioners want to see profiles raised through engagement with institutions, journalists and marketers; this is a challenge and opportunity for the sector as well as for individual artists themselves. The majority of practitioners and active workers in the sector are focused on the delivery of programmes, rather than on audience development, promotion and marketing; none of the roles cited as an occupation were directly focused on these areas; this also applied to the core clientele served by most in the sector, with just over 1% working directly with audiences. The majority of practitioners surveyed served children and young people as their clientele, presumably within educational and community contexts. This disconnect between the artistic practice of the sector and its reach in terms of audiences emerges strongly within the data.

There is a dearth of knowledge about who the audience for DAD is or can be, highlighting a need for more research to address this question. One of the key implicit bits of knowledge from the focus groups is a sense that there are many gatekeepers between practitioners and reaching an audience. In the North, programmers are seen as a barrier to DAD practitioners reaching new audiences. In this respect, venue education will be a crucial area of development. The impact of technology has helped the sector to

reach wider audiences. A related potential for widening public engagement with the sector is the opportunity to take work into a variety of non-traditional contexts, like museums, libraries and health settings. This was raised particularly in the Midlands and in London. In the North, finding audiences, rather than even just developing them is perceived as challenging; practitioners report that the wider dance sector is not set up or open to appreciating work that does not fit a post-modern contemporary dance aesthetic.

One Dance UK is seen as a crucial organisation in this respect, acting as an ambassador for dance and the DAD sector specifically in engaging organisations outside of the sector, and an advocate to organisations within the sector. Given the prominence that education occupies, as both an income source and development space for practitioners, a concerted aim at increasing the degree to which DAD is taught in an educational context, i.e. Higher Education, is seen as crucial to growing its audience base. The presence of DAD in both popular and youth culture, in particular the relatively new genre of 'Afrobeats' music is seen as a marketing opportunity for the sector; similarly, communication technologies have expanded the notion of who constitutes the audience for DAD to include a wider definition of Diaspora, as well as encompassing the African continent.

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### 4. LEGACY & ARCHIVES

There is a 'memory gap' in the sector – both of long-standing practitioners, their practice and careers – as well as of people who have exited the sector entirely. In all focus groups, for example, respondents stressed the need for establishing an archive in relation to DAD. There is a strong desire for this recognition of legacy to exist in practical terms in the form of platforms, and for these platforms to be connected to institutions that are custodians of the wider national and cultural legacy. This is another area where new technologies of video and the web are viewed as potentially transformative.

Legacy and Archiving are also seen as means of connecting young (er) people with the sector and as a pathway to a dance career.

The veteran dancers interviewed for this report stressed the need for archives as means of connecting different generations of dancers. Longevity does not appear to be a key challenge for the DAD sector. From the survey results the overwhelming number of respondents have been in the dance sector for between 10-40 years. This does indicate that the demographic profile of DAD is older, with the majority of respondents between 35-64 years of age. The benefits of this demographic profile are that there is a strong pool from which to gain knowledge to build a legacy project.

## 5. EDUCATION & TRAINING

The education sector and the DAD sector are not as connected as they could be. While dance is embedded in the national curriculum, its location as physical activity has previously been identified as problematic, and from respondents to this mapping project, the dearth of focus on DAD in tertiary and higher education is perceived as a challenge to the development of the sector. The expansion of training and education is a noticeable positive development in the growth of the sector, yet some respondents note that there is still no steady training pipeline of dancers from universities into dance careers. This also relates to a wider concern that there are not enough clearly mapped routes for dancers in developing a career within the sector and beyond. Furthermore, as noted in the Warwick Report, the importance of university educated consumers to the arts sector as the most reliable predictors of participation, makes

engagement with universities in particular a potentially key area of engagement for the DAD sector. Across the sector, there is a decided desire for more engagement with the education sector, both as a source of income and as the central point from which the growth of the sector could be nurtured. It is notable that educational institutions provide some of the key locations where practitioners are able to rehearse and deliver services, nevertheless at 10% for universities and 6% for school halls. This is significantly lower than the use of community halls at 32%.

There is a relatively strong concentration of practitioners in the education sector with 13% reporting their occupation as academic researchers but significantly less than the highest reported occupation of artistic director. In terms of institutional support for the sector, out of the 61 organisations cited as supporting DAD, 3 are educational institutions, and of these 2 are dance focused schools.

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## 6. NETWORKS & KNOWLEDGE GAP

A popular theme from respondents is a desire for knowledge, information, networks and resources. The practitioners in the DAD sector want the tools to develop their practice and institutions sustainably; practitioners desire more conversations and connections with and knowledge of gatekeepers to opportunities and resources. This includes a call for a strong hub to act as a central point for networks and connections across the sector. This concept of a hub was expressed differently across the regions:

- In the North, practitioners advocated the need for a dance agency specifically focused on African dance artists
- In London, one of the key desires was for a hub that encompasses the wide variety of styles within the DAD sector

ODUK is seen as a central point for knowledge and networking across the sector, particularly in London. In the North, the impact of ODUK's work in the DAD sector has been felt but is seen as restricted by a lack of staff, the picture is similar in the South-West. Across all regions there is a strong perception that access to opportunities for practitioners in the sector is controlled by 'gatekeepers' and hierarchies that disadvantage DAD practitioners. In London and the South-West, the desire to forge stronger global connections was highlighted, as is the need for 'space' defined both in physical and social terms; in London, the need for 'safe spaces' for black dance students in particular, that focus on their development, and opportunity to engage with radical black scholarships. In the North, the emphasis on space is on the lack of physical venues for artists to profile their works.

## INSTITUTIONS AND DAD

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The sector is supported by a range of institutions, though these organisations are part of the wider dance sector, most are not institutions dedicated solely or primarily to DAD practice. For organisations outside the sector several key desires emerge:

- They are keen to engage with DAD practitioners and institutions
- They perceive an absence of the skills they need from DAD practitioners
- They are invested in providing mentorship opportunities, platforms for visibility and routes into the/their sectors for talent from ethnically diverse backgrounds -

They identify the need for the sector to undertake its advocacy to increase its visibility, and inclusion in the wider dance and arts sector. The organisations that practitioners identify as supporting organisations are predominantly culture venues; perhaps, not surprisingly, London has the highest and widest range of supportive organisations. There are a wide range of networking organisations and associations, indicating that the involvement of practitioners in the associational world of the dance sector is quite strong. There are strikingly no organisations apart from the Arts Council England, with the core purpose of funding. Although many supporting organisations may be considered indirect funders through their commissioning of work. The predominance of venues as supportive organisations is balanced against the consistent signal from practitioners that institutions within dance but outside of the DAD sector, do not have a strong or clear understanding of its needs. DAD, and specifically African dancers, remain marginalised within the wider dance sector in terms of programming and visibility. The emphasis on contemporary dance as a definitional category and a practice further marginalises practitioners who do not fit neatly into it.

## NATIONAL PORTFOLIO ORGANISATIONS

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The National Portfolio Organisations have a clear role to play in the future of the Dance of the African Diaspora sector, and practitioners feel strongly that these should contribute to the growth of the sector. Several key areas emerged from the mapping exercise in this regard – in terms of frequency. We have grouped the needs that emerged from the mapping exercise into themes and categories. The DAD sector needs understanding, inclusion and provision from National Portfolio organisations; organisations working with the sector need to engage strongly with understanding the sector's history and, and the specific barriers that practitioners in the sector face, as well as the impact of factors such as geographic location. The strongest emerging need is a desire for more open engagement and inclusion of the sector through conversations, networking and sharing information, alongside building long-term, collaborative relationships with the sector. There is a strong expectation that NPOs will be providers to the sector of both material and social support through mentorships, provision of support staff in areas where this is needed, and physical space and platforms to develop and showcase their work.

## G.

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# PRELIMINARY CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS: A BROAD PERSPECTIVE

### FUNDING

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Funding targeted towards a diverse range of practitioners including emerging artists, established artists, as well as those in development or education – and diversifying the funding base of the sector so that it includes relationships with a wide range of funders from community and youth programmes as an income source to corporate sponsorships, public funding, and innovative profit-sharing models.

### RESEARCH & ADVOCACY

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The Dance of the African Diaspora sector requires continued advocacy to support the goals of increased visibility and increasing audience engagement and awareness of Dance of the African Diaspora within the wider dance sector, as well as embedding Dance of the African Diaspora styles and practices within education and training for the dance sector.

### RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

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For most practitioners, on an individual level, deepening their own artistic and creative development is of primary importance, and they

envisage: stronger security to develop artistically through a wider range of opportunities and stronger institutions created by practitioners, with high engagement and visibility with the wider dance sector, and a higher profile internationally through touring. Resources & Support for styles that are do not fall under contemporary styles as well as for practitioners in regions outside of London, in particular developing initiatives to educate venue programmers in understanding and appreciating the sector as a cultural product.

### COLLABORATION ACROSS THE SECTOR

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The sector would benefit from initiatives that encourage collaboration and partnerships amongst artists to form consortiums and partnerships, prospectively for a broad range of purposes including funding, as well as developing and presenting work, and building sustainable entities.

### LEGACY & ARCHIVES

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Developing archival and legacy projects that draw on the availability of digital and audio tools to document and share knowledge about the sector amongst practitioners and outside the sector, and to connect different generations of practitioners.







# TRIBUTE CHANGEMAKERS

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# RAVEN WILKINSON

## THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN BALLERINA WHO FOUGHT FOR DIVERSITY IN CLASSICAL BALLET.

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BY SUSANNA VIALE

In December 2018, an 83-year-old woman named Raven Wilkinson (1935-2018) passed away at her home in Manhattan. In her youth, she had made history for being the first African-American ballerina to join a major ballet company in the United States of America: Le Ballet Russe de Monte-Carlo. As history tells us, it's not easy being the first person to do anything.

Wilkinson grew up in the 1940s and lived at the time of American racial segregation. Just because of her skin colour, she had to go through many trials and



**"HER FIGHT AGAINST A TRADITIONALLY WHITE-DOMINATED ART FORM BECAME A TRUE EXAMPLE OF RESILIENCE IN DANCE"**

Raven Wilkinson © Maurice Seymour

tribulations in order to be accepted. She had to fight for her rights to dance in a classical ballet company; her fight against a traditionally white-dominated art form became a true example of resilience in dance.

Luckily, in recent years things have changed. With Misty Copeland's promotion to Principal Dancer at American Ballet Theatre, people were talking about her success being an African-American ballerina. This has led the audience to have a wider awareness on the issue of diversity and inclusion in the classical ballet world. However, little so far has been told about the story of Raven Wilkinson, who before Copeland, paved the way to a more inclusive and diverse approach to the art form.

Wilkinson grew up in a middle-class family in Harlem, New York. Her love for ballet began at an early age. She was only five when she attended her first ballet, *Coppélia*, performed by Le Ballet Russe de Monte-Carlo. After that, her mother tried to enrol her in the School of American Ballet, only to be told she was too young. Eventually, she was admitted to the

dance school of Maria Swoboda, a former Bolshoi ballerina. Swoboda's school was bought in 1954 by Serge Denham, director of Le Ballet Russe de Monte-Carlo, and Wilkinson auditioned with the company several times, only to be rejected. Through a friend in the administration, she learnt that the company was hesitant to hire a black dancer because of its regular tours in the segregated South. <sup>1</sup>

Le Ballet Russe de Monte-Carlo was a celebrated company that toured around the United States of America between the 1940s and 1950s, and the appearance of an African-American ballerina on stage in the South could have incurred threats from the Ku Klux Klan, which then had a heavy racist influence in the area. She anyway persisted in her attempts to join the company, and on her fourth try, was admitted on a trial basis.

She said in an interview, "I determined that you don't get anything sitting down and feeling sorry for yourself, and I just was going to go back and audition. I knew they liked my dancing because..."

**“SHE EMBODIED  
WHAT IT IS TO BE  
A LEADER AND  
GAMECHANGER.”**

*Misty Copeland*

we had a sort of idea of who they were interested in. And, I knew I had a gift of movement ...So I just said I can't just sit there and take somebody else's word for it." (Wilkinson in Allen, 2019)

In 1955 she officially joined the company and her repertoire included several solo parts like the Waltz Girl in Michel Fokine's *Les Sylphides*, the Chinese dance in *The Nutcracker*, a solo role in *Raymonda* and other ensemble roles in numerous one act ballets. However, as the seasons passed by, a series of unpleasant racial incidents happened during the company's tours in the Southern states. While riding down South with the troupe, she was met with resistance on stage and even while trying to check into hotels with them, all because she was a black woman. One day, during a performance, as she described it in the 2005 film-documentary *Ballets Russes*, two men came down the aisle of the theatre yelling - "Where's the nigger?". The men went onstage, moving from group to group in the ensemble, before eventually leaving. Another time she was asked at a hotel in Georgia whether she was black and, after answering yes, she was forced to move out to a hotel for 'coloured' people.

Despite her fair complexion and being encouraged to wear pale makeup onstage, Wilkinson refused to hide the fact that she was a black ballerina. This certainly provided her with even more obstacles along the way.

In an interview with Victoria Uwumarogie (2018), Wilkinson said "To me, it felt like I had to disown myself in order to do that. And I just felt that I couldn't do that. I felt getting out there and dancing on stage was a presentation of your soul. And if I couldn't look at my soul and be secure in who and what I was, then how could I say it on stage with my body while dancing?" (Wilkinson in Uwumarogie, 2018)

She continued to explain that she received a lot of support from her colleagues but she eventually decided to stop taking part in the Southern tours, as they became too dangerous both for herself and the company. Thus, she left Ballet Russe in 1961 and stopped dancing altogether for a couple of years.

She later stated that despite all the struggles she endured, they were all worth it to her: "We are a strong people. There is no reason for us to ever be ashamed



Raven\_Wilkinson in 2016 © Pamela White (Wikipedia Commons)

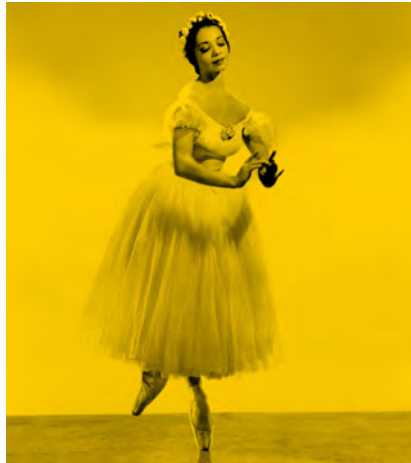


Image originally featured in Pointe Magazine

of anything. We have held up this country. It would have fallen in many of a time if we hadn't been there holding it up with our strength and our belief in it." (Wilkinson in Uwumarogie, 2018)

The hurdles she would have to fight for would open doors for today's ballerinas to be able to reach the greatest of heights. This includes the celebrated Misty Copeland to whom Raven Wilkinson was a proud mentor. Copeland came across Wilkinson's story in the film-documentary about Ballets Russes (2005) and credited her for having encouraged her to persevere in an art form that is still heavily weighted toward white dancers. The two met for the first time in 2011, and in 2015 the world learned of Wilkinson's historic career when Copeland became the first African-American ballerina to be named Principal in the American Ballet Theatre company's 75-year history. Wilkinson was also present at Copeland's ABT's debut in the lead role of Odette-Odile in the ballet *Swan Lake*, presenting her with a bouquet onstage.

Copeland, grieving on Wilkinson's death, gave a statement honouring this trailblazing artist: "I'm still speechless. She gave me the strength to continue pushing on when I felt defeated as a Black woman in

a career that has not traditionally been open to us. She embodied what it is to be a leader and game-changer. I wouldn't be here without her." (Allen, 2019)

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# STREET DANCE AND HIP HOP DANCE: A DISCUSSION ON TERMS AND CULTURE

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**BY TIAH PARSAN**  
**MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS**  
**OFFICER, ONE DANCE UK**

*Tiah Parsan discusses the terminology of street dance and hip hop, describing how the forms are evolving and changing as a culture. She interviews some of today's well-known street dancers who share their opinions and experiences.*

There are various definitions of the terms 'Street Dance' and 'Hip Hop'. However, because of these dance styles' ever-evolving culture, people tend to mix up the two terms without realising, and not everybody will agree with a specific meaning. As a dancer within the street dance community myself, I





**"STREET DANCE IS A WAY OF LETTING GO: THE STYLE HAS A UNIQUE WAY OF CREATING FREEDOM"**

Dickson Mbi at *Juste Debout UK 2019* © Léa L'attentive

want people to understand the differences between styles that sit under the street dance umbrella.

During my professional training at the University of East London, I found that while dancers interpret street dance in different ways, they should know the styles' correct history. I recently had the privilege of speaking to professional dance artists about their experiences and insights within the culture and dance styles.

#### **Is there a difference between hip hop and street dance?**

The definition for hip hop culture is different to the definition of the dance style hip hop. Hip hop culture was rooted in New York City by African Americans, Latino Americans and Caribbean Americans in the early 1970s, consisting of 4 elements; breakin', graffiti, DJing and MCing ([b-better.org.uk](http://b-better.org.uk)). Hip hop culture has grown from these beginnings and beyond, and dance has had a huge influence in media, fashion and music. Hip hop is also connected

to the street dance term; in my experience, the term 'hip hop' is used more frequently in the USA and 'street dance' is used more in the UK.

Street dance and underground dance are interchangeable terms and are often used as 'umbrella terms' for a large range of styles. Hip hop falls under that term as a specific dance form along with breakin', popping, house, locking, hip hop and more. These styles started in the USA with people dancing in the streets, nightclubs and more – but never in a 'high art' dance space such as a studio ([encyclopedia.com](http://encyclopedia.com)) Like any dance style, street dance is a way of letting go: the style has a unique way of creating freedom, using the cypher as a safe place to be free and exchange with different dancers – a moment of expression.

Dickson Mbi, Popper, dancer, choreographer, former One Dance UK Trailblazer fellowship recipient, and member of London-based crew Fiya House said; "I would not class the two terms to be the same, but they are interlinked at times. The 'street dance' term

is usually used to describe dances that are practiced on the streets such as breakin', hip hop, popping, locking. It's often used by mainstream media and popular culture as an umbrella term to anything associated or connected to these dance styles.

"Underground dance for me, is a combination of the movement itself. This is from the community of artists that are heavily involved in the club culture, battle scene, teaching and are very much committed to the grassroots development of the dance culture as opposed to its mainstream, commercial avenues." (2019)

### Music

Music plays a huge part within the street dance world and has evolved in tandem with the dance styles. In its infancy, people danced to beats created by the DJ in nightclubs which later grew and evolved into 'battle beats'. In terms of hip hop music, Ice, co-founder of London-based crew Future Formalities, observes that "there has been a clear change from the 'boom bap era' (a music production style that was prominent in east coast hip hop music during the 1990s), into a few genres that have been born from hip hop." (2019) Dickson Mbi adds "the development of music played by the DJs today and the competitive nature of the dance culture have all pushed dancers to experiment with different personal influences which has evolved the original foundations of popping." (2019)

### Change and Evolution of Styles

As street dance and hip hop culture lives on, the community is still continuously growing but the terminology and foundation steps created in the New York streets in the 1970s still stand today. Street dance styles are transitioning and developing in their own ways but are still connected to each other, creating new styles and being practiced worldwide. Street dance classes are now available in most towns in the UK – and as with for any dance form, teachers should ideally know its history to pass onto their students. It's brilliant that street dance forms are now recognised as an art form and can now be taught at degree level, for example, at the [University of East London](#).

Dickson Mbi said; "I think popping has influenced many dance genres because you see aspects of popping in many dance styles like contemporary dance, hip hop dance styles, bone breaking, krump and more. From the beginning, popping was mainly a social dance; a way of expressing and interacting with

others." (2019) DJ Renegade a DJ and dancer from London, adds "Breakin' has continually developed since the start and is still growing now!" It has recently been announced that breakin' is being considered for inclusion in the 2024 Paris Olympic Games. Breakz, a dancer specialising in popping, said; "I think it's a great opportunity to push the platform out to the world on a professional level because breakin' should have the same level of respect for the dedication, energy, focus and body conditioning it takes to be high level." DJ Renegade adds that he "supports breakin' in the Olympics as long as the special things that got it there in the first place are preserved." (2019) Although mainstream media tend to define the style as breakdancing, the official terms are breakin'/B-girling/B-boying.

Litefeet, a newer dance genre created in New York by AG, The Voice of Harlem in 1999, was developed from hip hop. Chrybaby Cozie, CEO of Litefeet teams Bwreckfast Club and Litefeet Nation said "Litefeet is now a spectrum that represents Hip Hop Culture." (2019) Litefeet started in New York's nightclubs and streets, where people danced to connect and have fun. Now, the dance style has become known worldwide, being taught in dance studios around the UK, Spain, France, Italy, Australia, Japan and more. There are various battles throughout the year including Litefest in London, the Litefeet Nation Europe Battle in Paris and Raw Lite in New York.

A dance genre named New Style Hustle was created and co-founded in 2010 in New York by Jeff Selby and Robyn Baltzer. It evolved from the 'hustle' dance style. Jeff said "I have been in the street dance scene for 30 years and was originally a House dancer. I found that the community had a lack of partner dancing. Movements were created by people putting their own ideas and interpretations into the 'Original Hustle.'" (2019) People of all different street dance styles come together to dance and make their own 'hustle' unique through jams and competitions. The culture has spread to over 30 countries, including the UK, Russia, Taiwan, and Japan.

Dickson (2019) observes, "Street dance influences can now be seen on TV, stage and music videos. Within popular culture, popping is such a global movement that anywhere in the world, people are able to recognise it now". Chrybaby Cozie said "social media is the main reason we were able to spread Litefeet knowledge across the world" (2019). This is how many styles have travelled – by bringing their own interpretation to the dance.



Kieran Warner at Litefest 2018 © Sophie Bradbury - Sophography



Break Mission 2018 UK World Finals © Kristine Lacontra Photography

When street dance gained popularity, theatres connected with street dancers, giving them more exposure and allowing them to showcase their work in a more 'high art' performance space. This happens regularly nowadays – specifically with breakin', one of the oldest street dance styles. Breakin' Convention is one of the UK's hip hop theatre performance showcases, created by Jonzi D in 2004. Abisola, house and hip hop dancer, welcomes the exposure larger events can bring, saying "because of dance events, children can now express themselves within a battle scene because there are no age restrictions and no barriers anymore." (2019)

Kieran Warner, hip hop and Litefeet dancer adds; "An important part of dance for the youth is that the principles of hip hop culture are: peace, love, unity and having fun. This leads the urban dance scene to be accepting of everybody. Hip hop events across the world are full of people of every race, age, gender, religion, sexuality, abled, disabled... And for some young people, this may be one of the few opportunities to come across people from different backgrounds." (2019) Jeff Selby said the culture is "forever evolving and growing, and it's great to see this generation of dancers embracing it." (2019) The street dance community feel that the form is more than just dancing: it's a family, a community and its legacy will carry on forever.

### Further Information

Keep a look out on the [One Dance UK website](#) for interviews with dance and music artists about the history of styles and the evolving dance sector. Want to learn more about Street Dance terminology? One Dance UK members B-better have listed some [here](#).

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- [Fiya House](#)
- [Ice](#)
- [DJ Renegade](#)
- [Breakz](#)
- [Chrybaby Cozie](#)
- [Jeff Selby](#)
- [Breakin' Convention](#)
- [Abisola](#)
- [Kieran Warner](#)

**RECORDED  
INTERVIEWS**

# BUILDING RESILIENT ARTISTS COMMUNITIES

## WITH JUDITH PALMER OF AFRICAN HERITAGE UK

BY HEATHER BENSON  
DAD SPECIAL PROJECTS MANAGER  
[WWW.AFRICANHERITAGEUK.COM](http://WWW.AFRICANHERITAGEUK.COM)

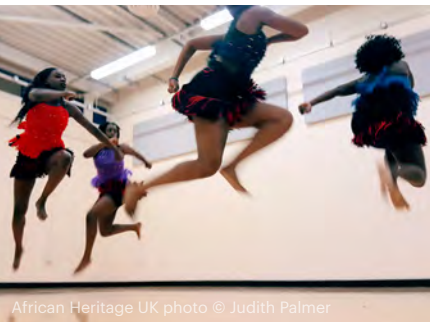


Over 35 years ago, Judith Palmer began her career in dance; most notably performing with Adzido Pan African Dance Ensemble. She later went on to serve as a dance lecturer at University of Surrey and IRIE! dance theatre for many years, whilst supporting the sector through her work with the Association of Dance of the African Diaspora (ADAD) of which she eventually became the Chair.

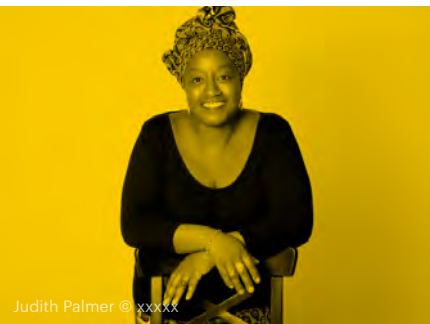
For Judith, her legacy lives through the nurturing of artists and passing on the knowledge to younger generations. No matter the organisation or her role within it, she chooses to lead through action, and “you can always find [her] doing something.”

She remains resilient by not giving up and remembering why we do this thing called dance in the first place. The love and passion Judith has for “everything African” shines through her practice. Judith dedicates herself to sharing her wisdom with the young artists developed through the teacher training and mentorship she provides within African Heritage UK.

Undoubtedly, she continues to be a great leader; building stronger more unified communities of artists, practitioners and carriers of the rich African traditions in dance and music.



African Heritage UK photo © Judith Palmer



Judith Palmer © xxxxx



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# PRACTICE TECHNI



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# CELEBRATING THE FIRST YEAR

## A LOOK AT BA(HONS) DIVERSE DANCE STYLES WITH IRIE! dance theatre

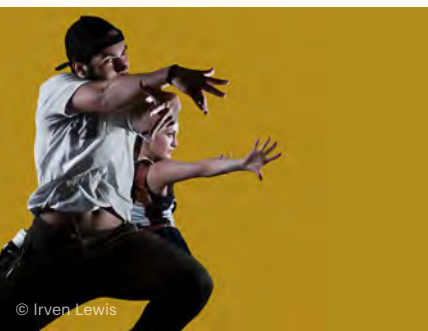
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**BY ROSIE LEHAN**  
**DIRECTOR OF ACCREDITED TRAINING IRIE!**  
**dance theatre**  
[WWW.IRIEDANCETHEATRE.ORG/BA-DEGREE](http://WWW.IRIEDANCETHEATRE.ORG/BA-DEGREE)

The BA (Hons) Diverse Dance Styles welcomed its first cohort in September 2018, run by IRIE! dance theatre and validated by the University of Roehampton. The course is the first of its kind in Europe to give serious credence to African and Caribbean dance, placing it on a par with contemporary forms. Having just celebrated the successful completion of the first year now is the time to breathe, take stock and consider not only the future of the course but the wider implications for advocating diversity in dance training with regards to sustainability and the resilience of the sector. Our ambition going forwards is that diverse dance courses become part of the Higher Education (HE) landscape so that diversity becomes fully integrated into dance education at this level.

While reflecting on the past year and the construction of the course, it becomes necessary to consider the background to the degree and share the ethos behind the development of the course to this point. Previous to the BA the company ran a Foundation Degree in Dance (FdA) in partnership with City and Islington College and London Metropolitan University (2008-2018) placing African, Caribbean, contemporary and urban forms on an equal footing. The FdA followed a period of research, 'Dance and Diversity', funded by National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA) and Arts Council England (ACE) to look at the place of cultural diversity in dance education and practice with particular reference to African and Caribbean dance forms.

The research concerned the visibility of the forms and what we perceived to be their minimal presence







**"THE EMERGENCE OF NEW ARTISTS WHO CAN EXPLORE AND DEFINE THEIR CRAFT WILL CREATE A WIDER PLATFORM FOR AFRICAN AND CARIBBEAN DANCE FORMS "**

© Irven Lewis

within HE. The desire to ignite the diverse training debate came through practical experience of preparing young people for HE through Further Education (FE) routes at City and Islington College and witnessing their disappointment at the lack of diversity within their training. This is where the journey started and has continued ever since with IRIE! striving to present a distinct formula for change in dance education.

IRIE! is fortunate to be part of a supportive dance department at the University of Roehampton who have acted as respectful advisors throughout the first year. The department have let the course breathe and welcomed the first cohort to a mutual sharing of work, to celebrate the end of the first year in May 2019. The courses were like chalk and cheese, with one department set on a beautiful sprawling campus by a lake and the other in the urban landscape of New Cross, housed in a busy community centre. However, with both partners willing to share their skills, this interesting juxtaposition has provided the basis for a positive exchange of ideas.

The dance department at University of Roehampton are renowned for their research, a factor that first attracted IRIE! since engaging with the dance and diversity research. We are excited about the potential for exchanges and developments that can take place within a university setting, surely a contributing factor to the sustainability of the course.

One of the outcomes to emerge from the research was a lack of visible academic material on African and Caribbean dance, a factor which IRIE! have worked to address through the development of a focused reading list and archive space. The challenge to expand this resource has meant brokering relationships with local HE institutions Trinity Laban and Goldsmiths College, University of London for library access. However, from September 2019, the company will be fortunate enough to house its own library. This critical advancement has been made possible through the Cultural Impact Development Fund, an innovative programme managed by Nesta.

**“DIVERSITY IN  
DANCE TRAINING  
AND CHOICE  
WILL ULTIMATELY  
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NEW AUDIENCES  
AND NEW  
PRACTITIONERS”**

The first group of students are diverse in age, ethnicity and experience, with many different declared reasons for taking this particular course. Needless to say, it was not what they had anticipated, particularly within the African and Caribbean modules, where they found the work to be technically challenging. Unfortunately for these genres, there are many myths surrounding their study, in particular that they are forms without a formalised technique. The challenge has been to bring a very diverse group to the same technical standard and through patient nurturing introduce them to the multi-faceted aspects of the different genres so that they become aware of not only the practical nuances but the cultural context of each form.

Connor Taylor, Year 1 student, says of the course, “When I first started this course, it was difficult, hard and I wanted to give up. However, by term 2, I was falling in love with and feeling confident in all types of dance.”

Lecturers have worked with the group to foster a sense of commitment through a shared vision for the course as the importance of diverse dance training has been a constant subject for debate. They are aware that they are making history and have valued the opportunity to be nurtured by a dedicated dance organisation such as IRIE! dance theatre. Collectively the group have brought humour and dedication to their studies, maintaining a willingness to help each other, with skill sharing being a key part of their working week. From the beginning they seem to have been aware that this is a unique experience and have challenged each other to be the best version of themselves.

Rebecca Okine, Year 1 student, is keen to continue her studies, saying “My first year with IRIE! has been great, I have really developed as a performer and feel supported by the whole team”

They have been fortunate enough to work with visiting artists such as Via Katlehong from South Africa and Professor Cornelius Carter from the University of Alabama, as well as the two resident artists, Akeim Toussaint Buck and Nicoletta Bonanni (former FdA student). Increasingly the Moonshot Centre, the base for IRIE! dance theatre and the course, has

become a centre for young artists to explore their work. The emergence of new artists who can explore and define their craft will create a wider platform for African and Caribbean dance forms as they attract new audiences and practitioners.

In terms of the students it has been important for them to see role models in their building, designing their own blueprints for their work. Going forward they will also need to employ an entrepreneurial approach if they are to thrive in the industry.

The team of lecturers and visiting artists working on the course have had a very satisfying year witnessing the steady progress and transformative power that the course has had on a committed group of students. The future looks exciting, with refurbishments planned for Moonshot and the inclusion of international students. However, persuading the dance industry and potential students that a diverse dance course is the way forward remains a significant challenge.

The course is not presented on a traditional campus and potential students need to be able to recognise the value of studying in a work space. The first years have involved themselves with many other projects, including ‘Next Choreography’ at Siobhan Davies Dance Studio and performances for the Leeds carnival in August. They are wonderful advocates and we are confident that they are the best marketing tool.

This article expresses the desire for diverse dance courses to become a significant part of the dance ecology. Diverse training needs to be seen as important, a visible factor, a viable training choice for young people navigating their way through their career choices or for dancers returning to study. Diversity in dance training and choice will ultimately encourage new audiences and new practitioners because they will see their cultural experiences reflected in education and performance. So, while IRIE! are justifiably proud of this landmark BA, we feel that the future for diverse dance styles, with particular reference to African and Caribbean dance will only be truly sustainable if this form of training becomes an integrated part of the dance education/HE landscape.

# DANCE OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA AT THE BBC PROMS

This summer, the BBC Proms at the Royal Albert Hall featured a wide variety of dance artists alongside the regular music programme. Dance of the African Diaspora was represented with tap and breaking – congratulations to all involved.

## PROM 64: THE BREAKS

B-boys and b-girls took centre-stage for a spectacular celebration of the virtuosity and variety of the music that has influenced the breaking scene since the 1970s.



Soul Mavericks performing at Prom 64 © BBC, Chris Christodoulou

**"THE ESSENTIAL VISUAL ELEMENT OF BREAKDANCING WAS DELIVERED WITH VERVE AND STYLE THROUGHOUT THE SET. AS THE MUSIC PULSED, THE SOUL MAVERICKS STAGED EPIC DANCE BATTLES, BREAKING, POPPING AND LOCKING WITH FLUID AGILITY AND BREATHTAKING ACROBATICS"**

*Classical Source*

## PROM 54: DUKE ELLINGTON'S SACRED MUSIC

Jazz, showbiz and spirituality came together in Duke Ellington's spectacular Sacred Concerts, which spawned three acclaimed, boundary-crossing albums. Drawing on all three, the Proms presented an exhilarating evening of dance, song and spectacle.



Annette Walker performing at Prom 54 © BBC, Mark Allan

**"ELLINGTON WROTE IN PHRASES OF MUSIC FOR THE TAP DANCER TO INCLUDE THEIR RHYTHMIC IDEAS – ALMOST LIKE TRADING FOURS WITH THE BAND – IMPROVISING PATTERNS AND SHAPES. THIS WAS YET ANOTHER ELEMENT TO THE PROGRAMME THAT BROUGHT DELIGHT AND COMPLEXITY."**

*London Jazz News*

# KEEPING THE BEAT OF JAZZ ALIVE

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**BY KAMARA GRAY**  
**ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, ARTISTRY**  
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Jazz dance is an ever-evolving genre with multiple definitions. As a dance artist specialising in the genre for over 15 years, I have a role to play in this evolution, and this role too has multiple definitions: as a teacher I have the opportunity to share knowledge of the genre; as an artist developing my practice through the application of continued professional development (CPD); and an educator who aims to honour the past and present contributors of the style.

In my role as a teacher and choreographer within the jazz dance sector, I regularly share my knowledge of the genre with learners and audiences alike. To support my efforts in building knowledge within the sector I created Artistry Youth Dance (AYD) in 2013. It is a vibrant and growing youth dance company which showcases aspiring dancers of African and Caribbean descent, encouraging them to achieve success through dance. The company aims to promote diversity in dance, and provides training opportunities for young dancers, enabling them to develop their skills in dance, the business of dance and related sectoral skills, thereby improving their chances of going onto further education in the arts.

According to the book *Jazz Dance: A History of the Roots and Branches*, "...multiple definitions have been an obstacle to creating a comprehensive history and discussion of the art form" (Guarino and Oliver, 2014). Nevertheless, that the roots of jazz dance lie in dance forms of the African Diaspora is undisputed. I see it as part role and part responsibility to help others navigate through the history and to develop a kinaesthetic appreciation of the art form in its many forms, with the best possible technique.



Temptation choreographed by Kamara Gray  
© Carole Edrich



Artistry Youth Dance © photo Carole Edrich



**"I PERSIST IN PURSUING JAZZ DANCE BECAUSE OF ITS EVER-EVOLVING NATURE. THERE IS ALWAYS SOMETHING NEW TO LEARN."**

Artistry Youth Dance © Carole Edrich

I teach jazz dance technique to the young people of Artistry Youth Dance, and choreograph performance pieces in the style. I also support the students by arranging technique classes in other styles. These include ballet, Horton technique, contemporary, and dance forms of the African Diaspora. As well as teaching jazz dance technique to Artistry Youth Dance members and the youth groups and companies that join us in various projects, I have taught jazz dance and its history, at numerous schools, colleges, and universities in the UK, and Kuwait, where I was the Head of Theatre at The British Academy of International Arts.

Another aspect of the role I have within the sector takes the form of supporting live performances that feature jazz dance. I believe it is important that the breadth of the style, as I've described above, can be seen at these events. To this end I organise group trips to watch theatre, for both the youth dance company and the wider community. We have recently watched performances of the genre in its broadest forms,

from Breakin' Convention which showcases the best in hip-hop, through Savion Glover's rhythmic tap performance at Sadler's Wells, to musical theatre in the West End's *Motown*.

I believe it is important not just to show the young people the diversity of dance forms and dance theatre within the sector, but also to ensure that they see and have access to people who "look like them" in professional performance settings. These activities also support the effort to build the sector by creating a lifelong appreciation of the genre.

Pivotal to a personal investigation of my role in the sector, jazz dance specialist Dr. Ama S. Wray (formerly known as Sheron Wray), Associate Professor of Dance at the University of California, Irvine, USA (UCI), and Artistic Director of JazzXChange dance company encouraged me to explore the following; "what makes you persist with pursuing jazz dance, and what are the drivers that make it significant for you?"

**“DESPITE THE  
EVER EVOLVING  
NATURE OF THE  
GENRE, THE  
CHARACTERISTICS  
OF IMPROVISATION  
AND THE USE OF  
RHYTHM RECUR.”**

I persist in pursuing jazz dance because of its ever-evolving nature. There is always something new to learn. Because of this I have come to understand that my role also lies in developing myself as a practitioner through CPD. In February 2017, I embarked on a three-week CPD trip to California, USA. I was invited to study alongside Dr. Ama S. Wray, where I observed and participated in daily lectures and rehearsals, led by Dr. Wray and the UCI faculty. The research trip helped me learn more about the history of the dance style and its connection to dance forms of the African Diaspora. It also helped develop my knowledge of the use of improvisation within the genre, an important feature of jazz dance, and a key component of Dr. Wray's teaching and choreography.

Marshall and Jean Stearns explain that dance in the African diaspora “places great importance upon improvisation, satirical and otherwise, allowing freedom for individual expression; this characteristic makes for flexibility and aids the evolution and diffusion of other African characteristics” (cited in Jackson, p.40, 2001). Improvisation is a key feature of Dr. Wray's practice, particularly her teaching model entitled ‘Embodiology’, of which Dr. Wray is the creator. It is described as “...an approach to contemporary dance innovation. Inspired by African cultural traditions, it explores the dynamism of rhythm and its relationship to spoken language” (Thomas, 2018).

The third element of my role includes honouring the past whilst acknowledging current practitioners. It helps to see the developments as well as the similarities that remain within the sector. In doing so, I acknowledge the significance of the 1980s UK club scene, which Michele Scott describes as showcasing “...a distinct form of Jazz dance”. The author goes on to state that the style showed “...variations on jazz of the past sculpted by the choreographic talents of British dancers [which] resulted in the evolution of an innovation and progressive style”. It is interesting to note that improvisation was again a key feature in Scott's descriptions, and key practitioners included Brothers in Jazz and IDJ (Guarino and Oliver, 2014).

Other notable contributors to the genre include multi-award winning Gary Crosby OBE. He is a double bassist, band leader, music arranger, educator, and Artistic Director of Tomorrow's Warriors, which develops young jazz musicians with an interest in performing.

Crosby, who continues to be a leading contributor to the jazz scene, is described as having an “...inimitable impact... on the fabric of jazz creation in the UK...” (Gary Crosby, n.d.).

Further contributors to the UK jazz dance scene include Carolene Hinds, who specialises in Authentic Jazz Dance and was the Artistic Director of the Jiving Lindy Hoppers from 1991 to 2007. In a 2006 interview, Hinds outlined the need to devise her own training programme (developed with Warren Hayes), in order to effectively train dancers skilled in Authentic Jazz Dance (ADAD Asks, 2006).

Meanwhile, a notable specialist in Authentic Jazz is Jreena Green, a dancer, movement director, and choreographer. Jreena is the founder of Jazz Dance Elite and The Lindy Hop Dance company. At the 2017 Bloom Festival event *An Evening of Jazz - Dance and Music*, both Green and Crosby “...highlighted the significance and importance of rhythm, alongside the freedom of non-prescribed steps” (Pindar, 2017), thus showcasing that improvisation and an importance of rhythm, continue to feature within jazz dance, despite other changing elements of the dance form. Green too, has devised a training module in her role as Head of Dance at Theatre Peckham entitled *Hip Hop to Charleston*, and has thereby provided an educational tool to broaden knowledge of the sector.

Annette Walker, tap dancer and hooper, also enjoys improvising and has graced the stage with jazz bands and other tap dancers in various cabarets, festivals, and concerts, including *Prom 54: Duke Ellington's Scared Concert*, at the Royal Albert Hall (see page 27). In a recent email exchange, Walker described creating the London Tap Jam with members of the tap dance community, which is “...quite possibly the longest running tap jam ever, and has introduced many UK tap dancers to improvisation and dancing



Artistry Youth Dance © Carole Edrich



Artistry Youth Dance © Carole Edrich



Artistry Youth Dance © Carole Edrich

with a live jazz band, both of which were once the staple of tap dance.” She feels that the “UK jazz dance scene [is] re-emerging through individuals who are passionate about both their work and wanting to connect with its history”, made possible through the use of the internet and social media channels. (Walker, 2019).

This list of artists is by no means exhaustive, but goes some way to illustrating that, despite the ever-evolving nature of the genre, the characteristics of improvisation and the use of rhythm recur.

Referring back to the question posed to me by Dr. Ama S. Wray (because I often do), I persist in the pursuit because, to be true to myself, I have no choice. I believe that teaching and supporting young dancers, is the path that was chosen for me. Like the genre itself, my role as facilitator is multifaceted, continually evolving and fun. I am honoured to be able to play my part within the sector and hope to continue for a long time to come.

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# JAZZ JAM AT U.DANCE 2019, SOUTHBANK CENTRE

**U.DANCE 2019**

20-21 July ○ London

In July, One Dance UK hosted a 'dance takeover' of Southbank Centre, Europe's largest centre for the arts. Hundreds of young people took part in performances at Queen Elizabeth Hall and Purcell Room, workshops at Rambert and National Theatre, and a dance film festival at BFI Southbank, showcasing and experiencing dance of many diverse styles.

Jazz and tap professionals Jreena Green and Annette Walker led a 'Jazz Jam' with Southbank Centre resident jazz ensemble Tomorrow's Warriors at the Royal Festival Hall's Clore Ballroom. Free for the public, this workshop investigated the links between jazz music and jazz and tap dance.





Jreena Green leading the Jazz Jam at U.Dance 2019 © Brian Slater



One Dance UK would like to thank Gary Crosby and Tomorrow's Warriors, Jreena Green and Annette Walker, along with event partners ISTD and Southbank Centre, for making this event possible.

The image features a solid yellow background. A large, semi-transparent circular cutout is positioned in the center, revealing a close-up, high-angle view of a metal spring. The spring's coils are dark and tightly packed, creating a complex, repeating geometric pattern. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the metallic texture and the three-dimensional quality of the spring's structure.

**LEGACI**

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# TALAWA DANCE ANALYSIS AND CATEGORISATION

## A TOOL FOR NON-MISAPPROPRIATION WHEN STUDYING TRADITIONAL DANCES

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It is hard not to lose too much in translation when having a 'Western' vantage point when studying African Traditional, Neo-Traditional, Indigenous, Modern and Contemporary dances. Much of the logic or context of the dances defies the categories most regularly used in the West, and it is important not to 'other' or exotify Africana dance vocabularies.

There are many methods and tools from various disciplines that one can use when approaching this task. We will here share some of the methodology that is used at Tabanka Dance Ensemble when approaching this as dance practitioners who deconstruct and reconstruct vocabularies and methodologies from African and Caribbean movement practices. In order to do this, while respecting cultures, semiotics and meaning making according to their original functions, we have had to use a plethora of tools and approaches.

This guideline would in most cases be our starting point which would determine how we move forward. It also reveals intersections between dances one might not initially see. It is our hope that this will be

of use to the wider community of practice both in the Diasporas, in the Caribbean and on the African continent.

The following are twenty-two points of questioning which help analyse and categorise a given dance according to its context. Before we go into the categorisations, it is worth touching on some helpful pre-categorisations used regularly at Tabanka.

### **HELPFUL PRE-CATEGORISATION**

#### Definition of African dance

African dance is probably one of the art world's most misused categorisations. African dance is as diverse as Africa's people. However, there are commonalities and similarities that run across the continent and the Diaspora, each with notable exceptions of course. It is useful for the purposes of this article to speak about African culture as an entity. African dance can be seen as a collection of dances that are imbued meaning, infused purposely with rhythm, and connected to the rituals, events, occasions, and mythologies of a



**"AFRICAN  
DANCE IS  
AS DIVERSE  
AS AFRICA'S  
PEOPLE "**

© Tale Hendnes

specific African Peoples. African dances can involve theatre, in that they involve song, drama, masquerade traditions, and music. This document acknowledges and appreciates the differences and contradictions that exist in and among the many cultures that are discussed throughout.

When looking at styles deemed to be 'traditional', the following three categories can be helpful:

**Traditional:** dances that embody the cultural values of a particular society, are acknowledged as being of that society, and adhere to specific customs and ritual.

**Neo-traditional:** dances that are created in the spirit or likeness of traditional dances but do not necessarily adhere to the original context of the dances. Therefore the function or what it communicates has changed. A traditional dance performed in the Diaspora would by this definition automatically become neo-traditional.

**Stylised:** dances that are stylised for stage and artistic performance and or that are for presentation

for outsiders more so than for people that come from within the culture. Here even more than in the neotraditional cultural rules, authenticity, and other such frames are more loosely referenced.

For further reading please look for Kariamuw Welsh Asante's books on African Dance.

### **CATEGORISATION**

African Dances generally fall under one or more of the following categories (it is possible for a dance to tick several of these categorisations):

Stilt dances, mask dances, military dances, war dances, martial art dances, rites-of-passage dances, middle passage dances, resistance to enslavement dances, nation building dances (post slavery), harvest dances, story & myth dances, social dances, recreational dances, ceremonial dances, funeral dances, ancient court dances, work dances, healing dances, religious dances, spiritual dances, ritual dances, national & ethnic identity dances, carnivalesque dances

Once dance in question has been placed into one or more of the previously mentioned categories (or made others to suit your purposes), you can continue working down the following checklist of 22 points:

### Categorisation of African Dance

<b>1</b>	<b>Is the dance SACRED?</b> Does it fit into one or more of the following classifications and subcategories:		1. ACHIEVEMENT (what an individual is on the basis of self effort)	
	Does it EMBODY THE SUPERNATURAL?		A. Dance	
	A. Inner transformation		B. Non-dance (eg. earning the right to enter a society)	
	B. External transformation (mask/costume)		2. AGENCY	
	REPRESENTATION OF DIVINITY		A. Group	
INITIATION - TRANSITION - RITES OF PASSAGE		B. Pair		
		C. Individual		
		D. Turn taking		
		3. ECONOMICS		
		A. Amateur		
		B. Professional		
		C. Sponsored		
		D. Gratitude (tipping from satisfied audience)		
		4. PARTICIPATION MOTIVATION		
		A. Required		
		B. Expected		
		C. Voluntary		
		D. Paid		
		5. PARTICIPATION ACTION		
		A. Dance initiated (doing)		
		B. Dance acted upon (becoming, as in possession)		
		6. CONSCIOUSNESS		
		1. TRANSCENDENTAL ALTERED STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS		
		Secular (achieve extraordinary metaphysical-physical experience associated with self-extension and exploration)		
		Religious (associated with deities, spirits, essence)		
		2. TEMPORAL-COGNITIVE		
		Exploratory (example: as in how to be a proper parent)		
		Control (maintaining cultural patterns and managing tensions, attaining goals, adaptations and integration; initiating, )		
		Physical preparation (for work, war, sex etc)		
		3. TEMPORAL/TRANSCENDENTAL (one form leading to another, intermeshing, alternating)		
<b>2</b>	<b>Is the dance SECULAR?</b> Does it fit into one or more of the following classifications:			
	Representation of deities and spirits as entertainment			
	Celebration of an event; birth, death, marriage, harvest, war			
	Education-initiation			
	Courtship (semba)			
	Recreation			
	Political action			
	Social commentary			
	Health and healing			
	Work			
	A special groups dances			
Western theatre setting				
<b>3</b>	<b>What is the RECRUITMENT PATTERN of participation?</b> Please fill out how it relates to the following. Only where applicable. Age, gender, ethnic group of participating dancer often provides much information about the function of the dance and the symbolism of the adhering costume.			
	1. Age			
	2. Gender			
	3. Ethnic group			
	4. Family			
	5. Marital status			
	6. Socio-economic class			
	7. Political affiliations			

## Categorisation of African Dance

<b>4</b>	<b>RELATION TO THE STATUS QUO</b>	
	Tradition is never stagnant and is always in movement. Not projecting negative western imperial attitudes on to indigenous traditions is important. Traditions, however old, are an active part of the tapestry that forms both what we deem modern, and contemporary. All cultures have a claim to modernity, and to contemporaneity, values which must be seen through the lens of cultural context. Make a point of analysing in what way the tradition in question relates to itself, other traditions, preservation and status quo. Is the function to:	
	1. Preserve for example traditions	
	2. Challenge for example traditions	
	3. Transform	
	4. Avenue of social mobility	

<b>5</b>	<b>PLACE (HOME, COMPOUND, MARKET, FOREST, RIVERSIDE, BEACH, CITY, STAGE)</b>	
	1. Rural	
	2. Urban	
	3. Foreign country	

<b>6</b>	<b>TIME</b>	
	1. Regularly occurring	
	2. Occasional	
	3. Seasonal	
	4. Celestial	
	5. Special celebration	

<b>7</b>	<b>ORIGIN (DIASPORA AND AFRICAN RETENTION)</b>	
	This relates especially to African and African Diaspora dance. If not applicable use this as a template in order to make new categories that are.	
	Is the dance and being performed fitting into one or more of the following categories? (Own ethnic group relates to the performers perspective, not your own).	
	1. Own ethnic group	
	2. Other African ethnic group	
	3. Non-African	
	4. African Diaspora	
	5. Other African Diaspora fusion (two or more African Diaspora dances mixing/fusioning)	

<b>8</b>	6. African and non-African fusion	
	7. Diaspora and African fusion	
	8. African and other non-white	
	9. Diaspora and other non-white	
	Note; sometimes makes sense to separate African continental diaspora from colony/transAtlantic diaspora, additional categories will then be;	
	10. TransAtlantic Diaspora and African fusion	
	11. TransAtlantic African Diaspora	
	12. Other Transatlantic African Diaspora Fusion (two or more TransAtlantic African Diaspora dances mixing/fusioning)	
	13. TransAtlantic Diaspora and other Non-white	

<b>8</b>	<b>DEVELOPMENT</b>	
	1. Independently invented	
	2. Imposed	
	3. Borrowed voluntarily	
	4. Elaborated creation	

<b>9</b>	<b>9. TRANSFORMATION</b>	
	1. Syncretism (blend of cultures - ethnic groups, traditional/modern)	
	2. Change over time	

<b>10</b>	<b>ACQUISITION OF DANCE</b>	
	Pedagogic/Didactic approach:	
	1. Direction	
	2. Modeling	
	3. Supervised practice and coaching	
	4. nabling discovery	
	5. Individual creativity	
	6. Communal creativity	

<b>11</b>	<b>11. EXISTENCE INFLUENCE</b>	
	1. Agriculturalists	
	2. Fishing	
	3. Pastoralist	
	4. Plantation	
	5. Colonial	
	6. Nation building	
	7. Urban	

## Categorisation of African Dance

<b>12</b>	<b>PATTERN OF MOTION, POSE AND EXHIBITION OF INTENTION OF MOVE</b>		<b>13</b>	<b>TIME</b>	
	1. BODY PARTS AND MOVEMENT EMPHASISED			1. Pace (slow/fast?)	
	A. Hips; pelvis rotation (5,6,7), swing, thrust, tremble			2. Length of movement (extended, shortened?)	
	B. Shoulders; shimmy, placing, extraction/subtraction, alternate punch, rotation			3. Accent	
	C. Elbow and forearm; hinge, stretch, slash, flap			4. Meter (single/multimeter?)	
	D. Arms; brandish, slash, swing, rotate, stretch			5. Polyrhythm	
	E. Knees; bend and straighten				
	F. Torso (1,2,3,4) flatback, arches, erect, rotate				
	G. Chest; pop, swing, rotate, lift, contract				
	H. Feet				
	I. Legs				
	2. LOCOMOTION (moving from one place to another)			<b>SPACE</b>	
	A. Walk			1. Size (big/small)	
	B. Step			2. Focus of eyes	
	C. Shuffle			3. Focus of body	
	D. Run			4. Focus of attention	
	E. Skip			<b>14</b>	
	F. Hop				
	G. Jump			6. Physical link	
	H. Slide			7. Circles	
I. Sweep		8. Lines			
3. MOVEMENT TRANSFORMATION		9. Levels; High, middle, low, floor level			
Change spatial ground pattern through location (doing)		10. Organised			
A. Change in body space/state through swelling, spreading, undulating (becoming)		<b>EFFORT</b>			
4. GESTURE (movement of part of body not supported through the whole body)		1. Strong/weak			
examples; rotate hand (eg. twirl cloth), hand signs etc		<b>15</b>			
				2. Bound/free	
		3. Shape/flow			



**Categorisation of African Dance**

STRUCTURE OF DANCE	
16	1. Set choreographic pattern
	2. Improvisation
	3. Repetition
	4. Alteration of components

PERFORMER-AUDIENCE INTERACTION	
17	1. Separation
	2. Merge
	3. Call and response

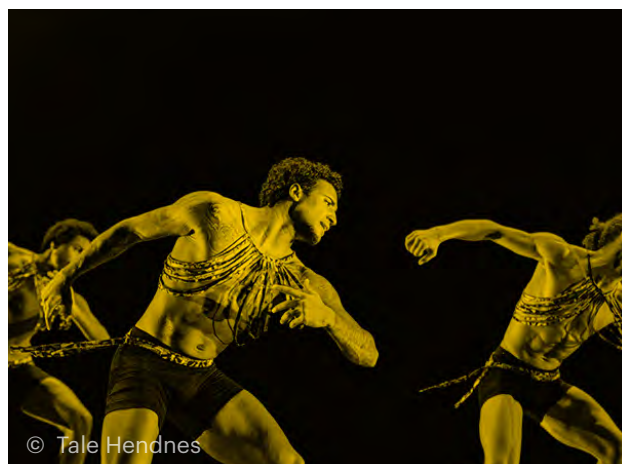
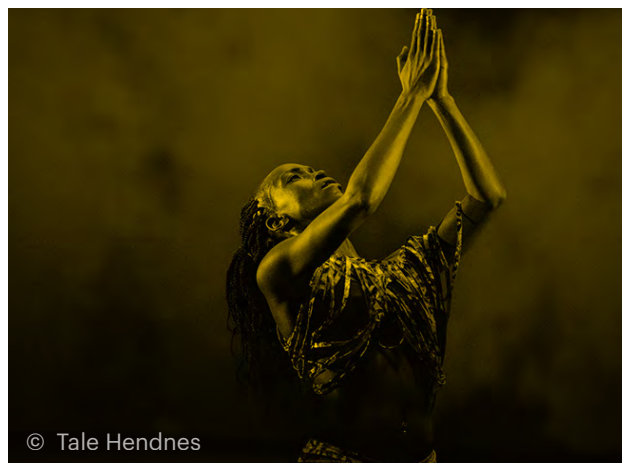
AURAL SETTING	
18	1. Musical accompaniment
	2. Dancer self-accompaniment
	3. Dancer follows musician/independent musician follows dancer
	4. Spoken word
	5. Body instruments
	6. Vocal sounds
	7. Body percussion

VISUAL SETTING	
19	COSTUME
	Representational
	Utilitarian
	Relation to the Body
	A. Reveals
	B. Conforms
	C. Conceals
D. Re proportions	
E. Extends	
F. Restricts	

DEVICES OF ENCODING/DECODING MOVEMENT	
20	1. Concretisation
	2. Icon
	3. Stylisation
	4. Metaphor
	5. Metronomy
	6. Actualisation

SPHERES OF ENCODING/DECODING MOVEMENT EMPHASISED	
21	1. Event
	2. Body
	3. Whole performance
	4. Discursive performance
	5. Specific movement
	6. Intermesh with other medium
	7. Presence (charisma)

CULTURES PERCEPTION OF DANCE	
22	1. Differentiation into institutionally bounded genres (types of dance)
	2. Prestige (hierarchy of dances)
	3. Aesthetic criteria



BOOK  
REVIEW

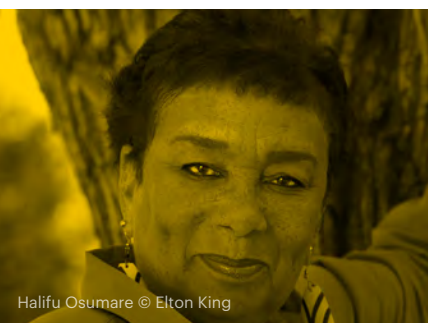
# DANCING IN BLACKNESS: A MEMOIR

BY HALIFU OSUMARE  
(WINNER OF THE 2019 SELMA JEANNE  
COHEN PRIZE IN DANCE AESTHETICS)

REVIEW BY DR 'H' PATTEN



CitiCentre Dance Theatre in 1983 in Oakland, California, which performed works by Halifu Osumare  
© Harry Wade

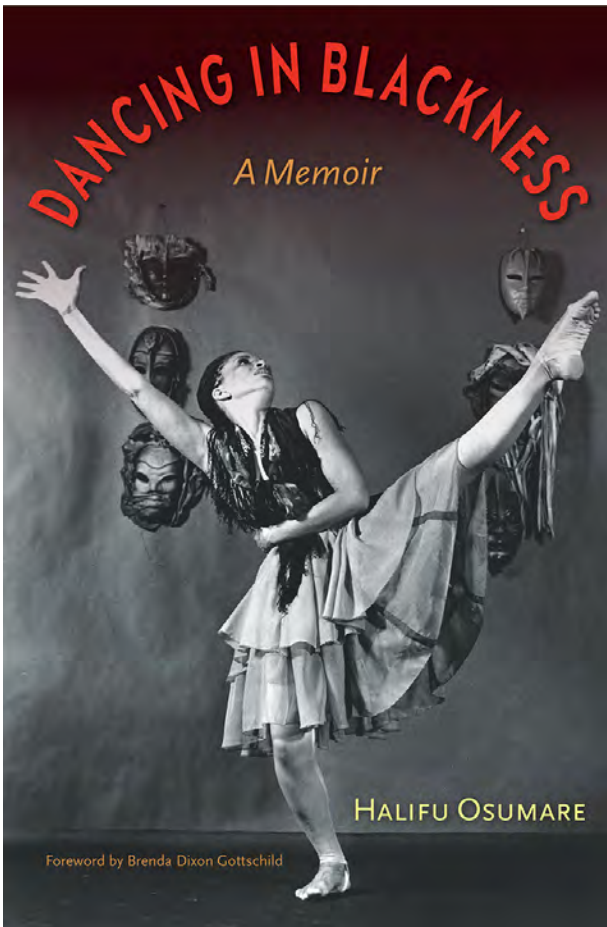


Halifu Osumare © Elton King

Born Janice Miller on the Island of Galveston (Gulf of Mexico), Texas in 1946, Halifu Osumare's dance career spans over six decades. As *Dancing in Blackness* (2018), her latest literary offering demonstrates, Osumare is an extraordinary artist, a dancer, choreographer, producer, cultural activist, scholar, and dance historian in the true vein of the African Griot tradition.

*Dancing in Blackness* is a valuable memoir charting the personal journey of a female dance practitioner; an important historical legacy as the black female story is often overlooked. Osumare's book is significant as it maps many defining moments within the genealogical story of Black dance in America, skilfully marrying social and artistic history. Osumare's personal genealogy of dance is divided across an introduction and six chapters, depicting the important eras of her career.

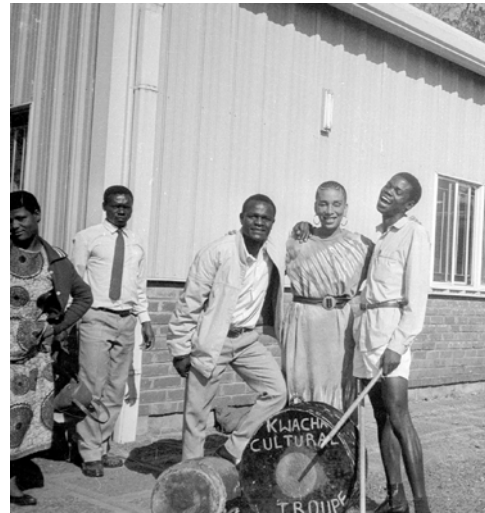
The introduction outlines her political activism and contribution to the Black Arts and Black Panther Movements, contextualised against the hippie movement of white America. Osumare relates this to the reader as organically as she does her engagements with major black dance icons such as Alvin Ailey. For Osumare, dance embodies "the personal, social, cultural, and spiritual—body, mind and soul" (p.5), always in relation to environmental and socio-political influences. Quoting the pioneering anthropologist and choreographer Katherine Dunham, she defines dance as 'a series of "rhythmically patterned movement performed by a sentient being"' (p.5). Hence, Osumare's memoir is a dialogue between dance, race, and her own deeply personal life experiences.



Front Cover - *Dancing in Blackness*

Chapters one, three, four and six detail Osumare's varied training and dance styles, which includes modern dance underpinned by her early introduction and training in Dunham technique with Ruth Beckford and later Dunham's dance partner Vanoye Aikens; Graham technique with former company members Bertram Ross and David Wood; Afro-Haitian dance with Jean-León Destiné and; African dance with C. K. Ladzekpo, Babatunde Olatunji, and later Albert Mawere Opoku, William Ofotsu Adinku and Francis Nii-Yartey amongst numerous other renowned practitioners. Crucially, she "explore[s] blackness in its political, racial, cultural, and postcolonial dimensions" (p.34), articulating and juxtaposing her own professional artistic development.

Chapter two focuses on Osumare's European residency, which explicitly represents her following in the footsteps of Josephine Baker, James Baldwin, Charlie Parker and many other "African American expatriates in Europe who leave not only to escape U.S. racial codes but also to escape the psychological aspects of racialization itself" (p.41). Osumare argues that an individual freedom, autonomy and 'sense of just being human' (ibid), has historically been afforded to artists in Europe. Conversely, she eloquently delineates how the deep seated, socio-political and psychological racism embodied within European stereotype notions of blackness serves to



Osumare with members of Kwacha Cultural Troupe, Malawi, July 1990. © Author.

**"A VALUABLE MEMOIR CHARTING THE PERSONAL JOURNEY OF A FEMALE DANCE PRACTITIONER "**

**'H' Patten**

'other' people of African descent.

In chapter five, *Dancing in Africa*, Osumare declares, "[t]hrough dance and music I experienced my Africanness within" (p.179), which could only occur through her engagement of cultural expression in Ghana, on African soil. This should resonate with the experience of many artists of African descent, who like myself, encountered the African cosmology whilst deepening ones knowledge of the "movements, the rhythms, and the accompanying songs ... compris[ing] the [African] dance complex" (p.177), as Osumare terms it. Insightfully, she teases out numerous African continuities that connect continental African dance practices with their contemporary diasporic manifestations in social dances such as Hip Hop, and I might add, reggae/dancehall or Grime.

In searching for 'cultural belonging', Osumare foregrounds "the expressive mechanisms of African peoples" (p.201), forming the essential African symbolisms that facilitate survival, renewal and resistance. I highly recommend this book to professional and student artists, scholars and individuals who like Osumare wish to 'claim the dance of black people as fundamental, not marginal, to American [and global] culture' (p.246).

**RECORDED  
INTERVIEWS**

# A LEGACY OF STRUGGLE AND JOY

## INTERVIEW WITH BILL HARPE

BY 'FUNMI ADEWOLE

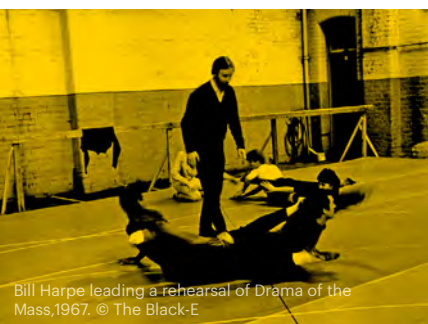


In tune with our theme of 'resilience', I interview Bill Harpe, dancer, obituarist, writer, pioneer, arts leader and arts and community activist. Bill Harpe founded the Black-E with his partner Wendy 51 years ago, which he still serves as Director. The Black-E promotes popular culture, artistic innovation and 'viewing and doing' to communities and audiences in Liverpool and beyond. For Bill, "Retirement is an invention created only for people who do not enjoy their work."

Bill read English Literature at Cambridge University, and started his working life as a soldier. He later moved into dance work; surprisingly with support from the army. Early in his career, he directed the Commonwealth Arts Festival (Cardiff, 1965) and a touring theatre production of *Oresteia*, in Zambia using local music and dance, an experience which shaped his vision of the arts.

A staunch advocate for dance by black choreographers, African performance, jazz, folk traditions, games and intergeneration arts, he is highly critical of the policies that shaped the beginnings of the Arts Council, which excluded these forms. Bill and his colleague Peter Stark were interviewed by the author Robert Hutchinson for his book, *The Politics of the Arts Council* (1982).

In the first part of the interview. Bill talks about the highlights at the Black-E. These include presenting *Ebo Iye* by Peter Badejo which he describes as a "seminal work", *The Lost Poets* and *The Beatles*. In the second part of the interview Bill talks about the contribution of women to the arts. Peppared with anecdotes, Bill paints a picture of life in the arts being one of struggle and joy and of legacy.



Bill Harpe leading a rehearsal of *Drama of the Mass*, 1967. © The Black-E



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# THE LEGACY OF A LEGEND

## CELEBRATING THEA NERISSA BARNES' CONTRIBUTION TO DANCE

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**KAMILAH CUMMINGS**  
[WWW.THEABARNESLEGACYFUND.COM](http://WWW.THEABARNESLEGACYFUND.COM)

On 12 August 2019, members from the arts and academic communities gathered from around the world for A Tribute to Thea Nerissa Barnes at the Lyceum Theatre. The gala was organized by Akosua Boakye BEM with the help of Barnes' family and support from the Disney production management team to honour the legacy of a legend.

Barnes was a dancer, choreographer, teacher, artistic director, and researcher who left an indelible mark on the international dance community. She also served as a member of HOTFOOT's Editorial Focus Group. Her remarkable career began in the USA where she performed with renowned companies including Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre and as a principal dancer and soloist with Martha Graham Dance Company.

In England, Barnes taught Graham Technique at Northern School of Contemporary Dance and Trinity Laban. She served as the Artistic Director of Phoenix Dance Theatre and led as the Resident Dance Supervisor for Disney's The Lion King musical for 17 years.

The spectacular tribute was an uplifting celebration of Barnes' extraordinary life in dance. It featured a stellar lineup of performances and appearances from esteemed artists including Germaine



Thea Nerissa Barnes performing Song  
courtesy of Barnes Family



**"MOST OF US CAN  
ONLY HOPE TO  
LEAVE A LEGACY  
LIKE HERS."**

Thea Nerissa Barnes. © Kenn Duncan courtesy of Barnes Family

Acogny, Tansuree Shankar, Dr. Sharon Watson of Phoenix Dance Theatre, Urdang, Laban, AkomaAsa Performing Arts Academy, Matt Henry MBE, Rachel John, and current and former members of The Lion King, London cast. Those in attendance were treated to rare performance footage of Barnes along with extracts from her published and forthcoming scholarly research.

The event also served as the official launch of the Thea Barnes Legacy Fund (TBLF). The TBLF is a donor-supported independent fund established to support individuals in creative and academic areas that reflect Barnes' interest in dance, performing arts, scholarly research, mentoring and guidance. The objective of the TBLF is to provide support through funding and/or mentoring. Applications are open for individuals

seeking support to further artistic and educational practices or make a career transition across the arts and creative industries.

Barnes once stated, "I consider it my responsibility to support aspiring dance practitioners, novice as well as experienced aficionados." The TBLF is rooted in this ethos and will ensure that Barnes's legacy of supporting the dance community continues.

For more details and to apply for funding or to donate in support of the fund, visit [www.theabarneslegacyfund.com](http://www.theabarneslegacyfund.com) or contact [info@theabarneslegacyfund.com](mailto:info@theabarneslegacyfund.com)

# AN AUDIENCE MEMBER'S REVIEW

## THEA BARNES LEGACY TRIBUTE, LYCEUM THEATRE

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**BY KATIE HIGGINSON-TRANTER**  
**UNIVERSITY OF EAST LONDON**  
**DANCE STUDENT**

Arriving at the Lyceum, the audience were greeted by banners from *The Lion King* – a beautiful tribute and touching recognition of Thea Barnes's role as the show's former West End Dance Supervisor. The sounds of reunion filled the stalls with waves, embraces and "how have you been's?" from every generation, epitomising the sense of community surrounding Thea Barnes's legacy. Students, family and friends reminisced over memories they shared with her, how they admired or were inspired by her. As everyone settled, a slideshow played on stage showing Barnes' work, focussing on her gracious performance in Martha Graham's *Temptations of the Moon*. The afternoon's hosts, Akosua Boakye BEM and Daniel Blake, entered the stage, giving thanks to all those involved in the Tribute. Blake went on to share his experience working with her, describing her as a "passionate, nurturing and resilient artist."

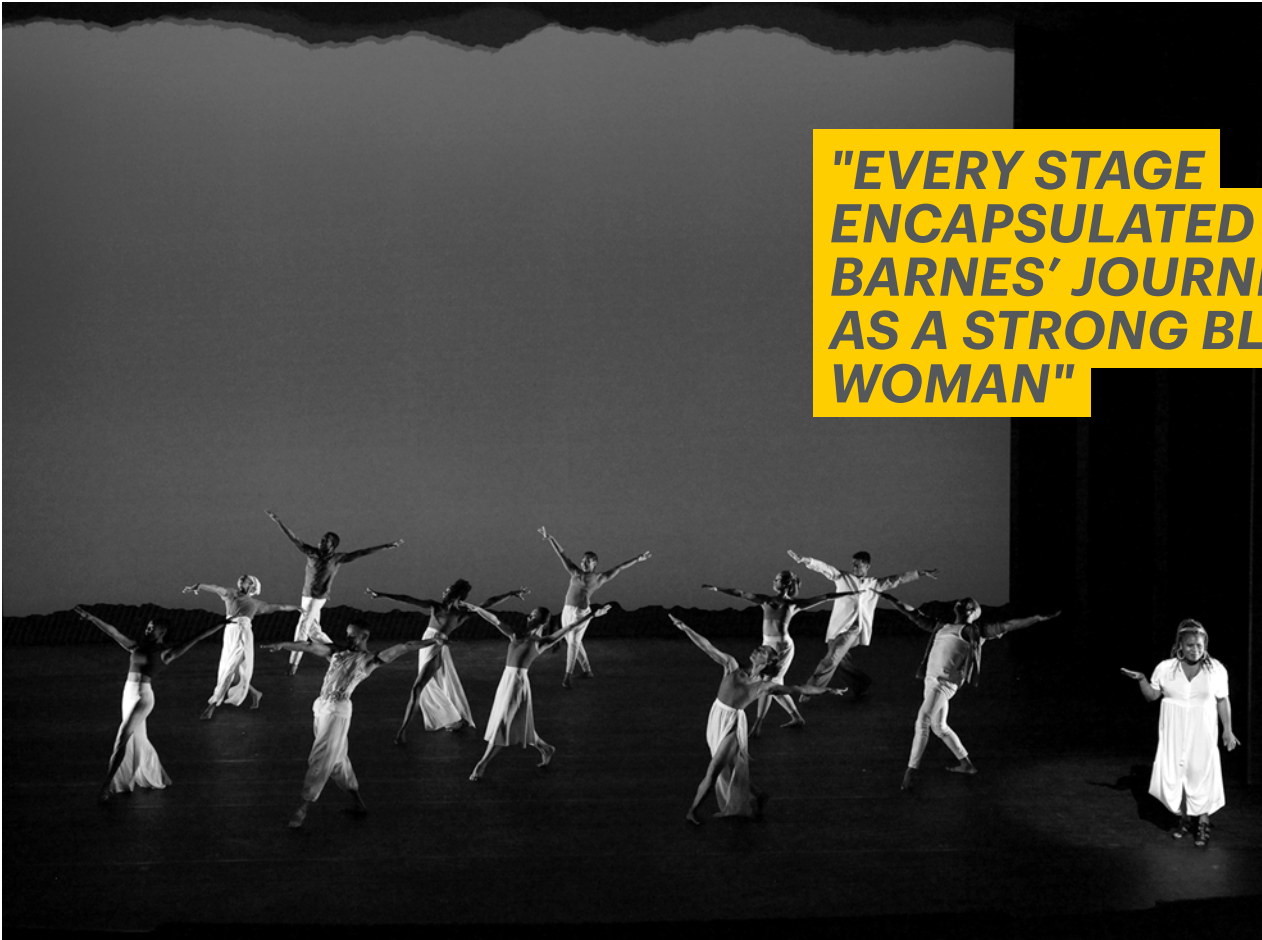
The live performances began with Urdang Academy's *Freedom*, choreographed by NEO. This sharp, powerful commercial piece perfectly aligned with the testimonials shared about Thea Barnes. Her sister, Cheryle Barnes, would later explain that her sister would "never settle for ok" referring to it as "The Mother of Mediocrity" (2019) and Urdang Academy exquisitely captured Barnes's defiance against the average. Zara Bartels, Dance Captain alongside Barnes at *The Lion King*, described Barnes' drive as "unwavering" and the constant energy and fire of the dance work *Freedom* was no different. Thea Barnes' passion was certainly not limited to dance, with tributes including live singing performances and readings from her pioneering academic research.



Thea Barnes Tribute,  
image Kabria Cummings



**"EVERY STAGE  
ENCAPSULATED  
BARNES' JOURNEY  
AS A STRONG BLACK  
WOMAN"**



Performers at A Tribute to Thea Nerissa Barnes at the Lyceum Theatre © Christopher Icha

Every stage encapsulated Barnes' journey as a strong black woman finding ways to represent her African American heritage. The excerpts of Barnes' academic research read shared her time in which she learnt Fanga and connected with her African roots. Testimonials also shared Barnes' discussion surrounding finding one's "authentic self" (2019, p.84).

The final performance of the afternoon was delivered by Akosua Boakye's AkomaAsa Performing Arts Academy. The sound of drums filled the room and the audience rose to their feet. A wave of harmonious energy swept through the room as the performers began to sing with the event's hosts joining the performers on the stage. The drummers moved through the audience and out into the lobby drawing this celebratory event to a close. As they began to part ways, it is in no doubt under the watch and protection of Thea Barnes, who has certainly left a legacy that will continue to be shared for many years to come.

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Barnes, T. (2019) 'Ch.7 Trails of Ado: Kokuma's Trials of Self Defence' Narratives in *Black British Dance: Embodied Practice* Edited by Adesola Akinleye. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 83-100.

Thea Barnes Legacy Tribute (2019) Available [here](#)

# This magazine was launched at Re:generations 2019

*Re:generations – dance and the digital space* would not have been possible without the generous support of many organisations and individuals. We would like to thank all the Re:generations 2019 contributors: hosts, speakers, presenters, performers, artists, facilitators, participants, delegates and guests.

Special thanks to the Re:generations partners and their respective boards, staff team and volunteers at One Dance UK, IRIE! dance theatre, Middlesex University, dance Immersion, The Lowry and our independent academic advisors Dr Adesola Akinleye, Dr Funmi Adewole, Dr H Patten, and Tia-Monique Uzor.

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