

YOUTH DANCE ENGLAND

in association with
NATIONAL YOUTH DANCE TRUST

Youth Dance England Newsletter

February 05

Welcome to our first newsletter. We would like to take this opportunity to share some of the excellent work that Youth Dance England has been delivering over the past few months.

The most significant month of the year to date has been January, which saw the collaboration between YDE, The Royal Festival Hall, London Youth Dance Network to create The Big Youth Dance Weekend to celebrate youth dance in all its vibrant forms.

The Big Youth Dance Weekend 22-23 January 2005

The first national event of its kind for over a decade presented free dance workshops, performances, youth dance film screenings, an information fair and the YDE Practitioners' Conference. The entire weekend was a tremendous success providing over 7,500 people with the opportunity to watch, participate in and embrace the energy that exonerated through the building. Each day young people were able to join in free dance workshops on the Ballroom floor, which included: African Peoples' Dance, Ballet, Bollywood, Capoeira, Contemporary, Musical Theatre and Hip Hop. The response was fantastic, every class had between 50 – 100 young dancers.



Photo: Benedict Johnson. Dancers: Boy Blue , London.

Young people were dancing everywhere! All levels of The Royal Festival hall came alive with site-specific dance pieces performed by nine London based Youth Dance Companies. Audiences were taken on a tour to discover innovative dance pieces being performed in obscure spaces.

An important part of the weekend included the screening of Youth Dance Films. We were overwhelmed by the amount of film applications received and were absolutely delighted with the excellent standard of films submitted for entry. The chosen films were screened at the RFH as part of the event and were really appreciated by all audiences.

YDE Launch

Youth Dance England was officially launched by Sue Street, Permanent Secretary, DCMS and Robin Kiel, Secretariat to the Music and Dance Scheme, DfES on Saturday 22 January 2005 at the Royal Festival Hall as part of The Big Youth Dance Weekend.

The launch event also provided the perfect opportunity for YDE to announce the appointment and introduce its new Chair, **Jeremy Newton** who is the Chief Executive of NESTA (National Endowment for Science Technology and the Arts).



Photo: Benedict Johnson. Sue Street, Permanent Secretary, DCMS.

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YDE and RFH Co-Commission

The Youth Dance England guests also had the opportunity to watch youth dance performances around the Royal Festival Hall including:

WHAT HAPPENED NEXT... a performance commissioned for the ballroom by YDE and the RFH. Conceived and directed by Mark Murphy (ex V-toI), the performance piece was developed over 4 months in various locations across the country and culminated with the 60 young dancers coming together for the first time on Friday 21st January, one day before the Premier of the work on Saturday 22 January. The performance animated the space to the accompaniment of live sound mixing featuring an original score by Graham Cunnington (Test Dept.) and incorporated the diverse styles, techniques and creative talents of the dance companies involved: **Cando II** and **Impact** from London, **RJC Youth Dance** from Leeds, **Hampshire Youth Dance Company** and **Ludus** from Lancashire.



Photo: Benedict Johnson. Dancers: Impact, London.

YDE Conference 22-23 January 2005

YDE hosted a 2-day Connecting Young People and Dance Conference, which attracted 92 delegates.

Attendees included: Youth dance artists and practitioners, dance artists, community dance workers, dance managers, dance educators, private dance teachers, dance officers, youth arts practitioners, arts development officers, sports development workers, and arts policy makers from across the country.

The strong programme brought together experienced professionals from various sectors in panel discussions and break out sessions, which provided the ideal platform for information sharing and debate.

Following the huge success of this conference and the evident need for such events, YDE are committed to deliver bi-annual conferences in the future.

National Youth Dance Performance 10 July 2005 Birmingham Hippodrome

YDE will be hosting its first National Youth Dance Performance in Birmingham 2005, celebrating the excellence and diversity of youth dance. YDE is inviting 11 youth dance groups from across England to participate in this exciting high profile event that culminates in a performance at the Birmingham Hippodrome on Sunday 10th July 2005. The National Youth Dance Performance will be part of a weekend youth dance event organised and sponsored by YDE. The event will comprise workshops for young people and practitioners, a performer's party and the National Youth Dance Performance at the Birmingham Hippodrome. Workshops will take place at the DanceXchange and Birmingham Royal Ballet studios. After receiving over 70 applications, the YDE selection process is now under way. Phase 1: 60 of the groups have been selected and invited to perform their dance pieces at Regional Events between February and March. Phase 2: 11 groups will be selected from the Regional Events and the final groups will be announced in April. Visit www.yde.org.uk for more updates.

On-line database

The YDE on-line database is growing rapidly. All entered information relating to youth dance provision is now searchable by region, dance style, age and type of group. We are calling for all dance organisations or groups who wish us to list their classes and events to send us the information and we will add it to database for viewing. Visit www.yde.org.uk to enter details and search for youth dance activity.