



Kerry Williams  
Executive Director

I'm delighted to be introducing the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of Talking Pointe! We have had a very exciting and busy Summer, and Autumn term is in full swing. In June the YDA held its 2<sup>nd</sup> choreography competition and once again the standard was exceedingly high. Our YDA Associate Course for talented pupils across the country has grown with nearly 50 students attending the intensive program held on Saturdays. This term the Associate students have learnt repertoire from Swan Lake, Beatrix Potter and Romeo and Juliet. Auditions for this course will be held in March and May 2015. Summer saw many dancers from both schools go on an incredible trip to Cuba to train with ProDanza and perform Swan Lake with the company at Teatro Nacional de Cuba. November has even seen our dancers in Downing Street at a sparkling reception for our Foundation.

The WLS Dance production of The Nutcracker is nearly upon us and I am always amazed at how professional the company rehearse and perform. Right from the little Sugar Mice to the Lead dancers, their dedication and hard work really shine through; I can't wait to see these talented dancers on stage. For me The Nutcracker is the perfect way to start the Christmas festive season! I wish you all a wonderful Christmas and New Year.

## WHEN IN ROME!

Davide Navisse is a talented young Italian dancer. He won a scholarship at a

Choreography competition in Rome last December to spend a week studying with YDA and WLS Dance. Our very own Raymond Koning, who was on the judging panel, awarded him the scholarship. We asked Davide what he thought of his experience with us in London.

"I must say that for me it was a great joy and an honour to study here because I got to know and learn a different method of teaching and I've met a lot fantastic and kind dancers and I made new friends. I am very happy to have had this opportunity and it was a wonderful experience that I will never forget. I sincerely thank Ms Anna du Boisson, the teachers Raymond Koning, Adam Pudney and Josephine Holling for their kindness, time and their beautiful classes. Ms du Boisson invited me also to dance in the Nutcracker this year and I am very thankful to get this stage experience. See you all at the Nutcracker."

Davide will arrive into London to rehearse for two weeks before The Nutcracker. See if you can spot him. Clue: he has come to London to party, and isn't camera shy!



## STOP PRESS.....STOP PRESS.....STOP PRESS.....STOP PRESS.....STOP PRESS..... CHOREOGRAPHIC COMPETITION 2015 At Bloomsbury Theatre In June



Join us next summer at the finals of our Choreographic Competition 2015. The event will take place throughout the day culminating in a Choreography Finals Competition Show with guest performances in the evening. Tickets will go on sale for this event on the Bloomsbury Theatre website in the spring. Come and watch the dancers from WLS Dance, YDA and YDA Associates who make it through to the final stage for an evening show of entertainment and guest dancers including Yat-Sen Chang. Our very own Strictly!

### Results of this year's Choreography Competition:

This year's judges (Morgann Runacre-Temple, Holly Webster, Chris Akkrill and Yohei Saski) had a very difficult job in choosing a winner but in the end they decided to award joint first place to Megan Hill's classical dance and Hamish Longley original breakdancing show. Alessio Di Traglio won second place with his dance called Paradise and last year's winner, Iona Green was also congratulated on another excellent piece of classical

## On The Up.....At Downing Street

This month, we were delighted to be able to thank many of our loyal supporters at a reception with our Honorary Patron, Darcey Bussell CBE, in the prestigious surroundings of Downing Street. We were extremely proud to co-host the evening with the RT HON NICKY MORGAN MP, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EDUCATION, who endorsed the importance of Dance & Music alongside mathematics in the classroom and praised the opportunities offered by the scholarship programme.

Darcey thanked invitees for their generous support at the hugely successful Royal Opera House Gala held in March, paying tribute to Anna du Boisson's dedication to her students and the excellent results achieved by them, not only within the world of dance but in their lives beyond. A truly special and memorable evening for guests and the students from WLS Dance and YDA who came to help.



**DONATE NOW** Please help more young dancers pursue their passion and fulfill their dreams. The Du Boisson Dance Foundation's mission is to help those in need of financial support to pay for ballet lessons, fees, physio, kit etc.

Changing lives - step by step. All support greatly appreciated.

There are many different ways to donate:

Bank Transfer: Barclays Bank Sort Code: 20-74-63 Account No: 30824941 OR

Cheque payable to The Du Boisson Dance Foundation

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

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

**JustGiving™**

Donate now

## OFSTED

In June 2013 the Young Dancers Academy achieved 'OUTSTANDING in all areas'. A school gets 'Outstanding' when it provides an exceptional quality of education and significantly exceeds minimum requirements. Outstanding was given for: Pupil's achievements, Pupils' behaviour and personal development, Quality of teaching, Quality of curriculum, Pupils' welfare, health and safety and Leadership and management. We are very proud of these qualifications and very thankful to all the teachers and students who helped us to achieve this.

**Ofsted**  
Outstanding



## NUTS ABOUT NUTCRACKER

Don't miss out on our fabulous Nutcracker Shop in the Bloomsbury Theatre foyer when you come to see our Nutcracker performances. We have lots of new items this year, including Nuts about Nutcracker t-shirts, musical nutcrackers, candles, teddies and jewellery, something for everyone. The stall is run by two fabulous parents, Lucy Turner & Jane Wyllie, and all profits will go to The Du Boisson Dance Foundation.

"We have had such fun preparing the Nutcracker Shop this year. It is hard work organising it all but very rewarding, and a big thank you to everybody who helped us. We hope everyone will love all the new things, especially all the decorations from Gisela Graham and the new "Nuts About Nutcracker" t-shirts. Needless to say, we are both very excited and now completely obsessed with Nutcrackers!" Find us before and during the performances, even after the matinees. Great xmas gifts for all - don't go home without yours.



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

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Young Dancers Academy and  
West London School of Dance



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@WLS Dance



Mr. Hill  
Mathematics  
and Physics  
teacher at  
YDA

Who are you and what do you teach at YDA?

My name is Mr Hill and I teach Mathematics and Physics to GCSE level, and next year I will also be teaching Biology.

What do you like most about your subjects?

I love how it is possible to make predictions or discover new things just from simple calculations. This is where maths and physics work so well together.

How did you find yourself at YDA?

I studied Physics and Philosophy at the University of Sheffield, which was a really interesting mix of subjects for me. It meant that if ever I'd had enough of equations for the day I could move onto an essay instead. After I graduated I qualified as a teacher and worked for three years in a school and college in Middlesbrough before moving to London. I was contacted by YDA initially to teach GCSE Physics, which after a few months has transformed into a full time post, which is brilliant.

Is it different teaching dancers?

Young dancers have an excellent core understanding of physics principles as they have to use them everyday when they dance. Whenever they are on pointe, they are increasing the pressure on their feet by decreasing the surface area on which they are standing, or when jump they are transferring kinetic energy into gravitational potential energy. They understand the principles, but in the classroom we have to learn how to describe and explain them using appropriate language and equations; this enables them to achieve highly in their GCSEs.



Georgina  
McDermott  
Teacher at  
WLS Dance  
and YDA

## TRINITY EXAMS

Georgina McDermott has taught musical theatre, jazz and ballet at WLS Dance and YDA for several years. She also joined our dancers in Cuba teaching jazz and ballet. This summer, her students all achieved the highest possible results in their Trinity Musical Theatre exams performing extracts from musicals or films. To acquire these top results, the students must demonstrate skills of acting, singing and dancing in equal measure.

Georgina was quite rightly thrilled with the results and said, 'It has been my pleasure to work with the students of YDA preparing them for this exciting qualification. The Trinity exam not only gives the students a valuable opportunity to perform under pressure, it also provides essential experience in developing their acting, singing and dancing ability (required skills for college auditions and the professional industry) whilst learning about the fabulous world of Musical Theatre.

This coming year, the students are now working on numbers from Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, Les Miserables, Snoopy, Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, Billy Elliot, We will Rock You, Dancin', Fosse, Grease and Wicked to name but a few! Every year group is looking forward to performing these wonderful extracts to staff, family and friends throughout the year ahead, in preparation for the next Trinity exam in summer 2015. Wish us luck."

## 'I AM'

A Poem by Nat Levy (10) Student at WLS Dance and the YDA Associates

I am my mother who helped me get through my exams and all the time kept me calm

I am the separation between my parents and the anger in me

I am my grandfather whom I never met and the heart attack that killed him

I am my dog who is always there when I am sad and the mark on my skin from where he once bit me

I am the scar on my finger and the treadmill I caught it in

I am my friend Hugo who said he was going to win the 400 meters and the track that I won it on

I am my sisters whom I miss when I get home from school

I am my friends and the smiles on their faces which lighten up my day

I am the challenges I have overcome which I never thought I would

I am my dancing and the happiness and passion that go with it

I am who I am because of everyone.

## Did you know that.....

Our Nutcracker this year has 218 dancers and a staff of 40

By saying "break a leg" before a show, people are saying the exact opposite of what they hope will happen on stage. It is Bad Luck to say Good Luck!

The amount of energy needed to perform a ballet is about the same as playing two full football matches or running 18 miles

Some professional dancers can go through 20 pairs of ballet shoes a week

## The Shepherds Bush Village Hall for hire. Large studio. Bulwer Street, London W12 8AP

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

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

Mirrors, Ballet Barres and CD system

Located between Sheperds Bush Green and Westfield with easy access to public transport.

For further information on hiring the Village Hall, please contact:

villagehallw12@gmail.com or 07954 141607 (for Village Hall bookings only).



Isla Ghali (14) YDA Year 10

## Kareen Fares (15) WLS Dance

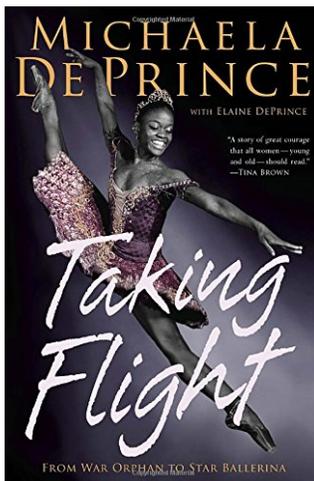
Our trip to Cuba was overwhelmingly eye opening and one of many memorable experiences. It allowed me to acquire so many assets, not only to ballet but also general life, such as handling life away from home and being independent. We spent packed days rehearsing and taking classes at ProDanza school, through which I discovered an incredible amount about the Cuban culture and their approach to many different styles of dance. A highlight was certainly the amazing opportunity to work amongst very friendly members of the company in the production of Swan Lake and performing in the striking Cuban theatre.

I particularly enjoyed that we shared our roles with the Cuban dancers in alternating casts, meaning I could ask my counterpart questions (though the language barrier proved to be challenging). Seeing how the Cuban dancers appreciated and made the most of the basic facilities they possessed enabled me to realize how fortunate I am to have the facilities and resources that we do at YDA and WLS Dance. Overall I am so grateful to have been a part of this unforgettable experience.

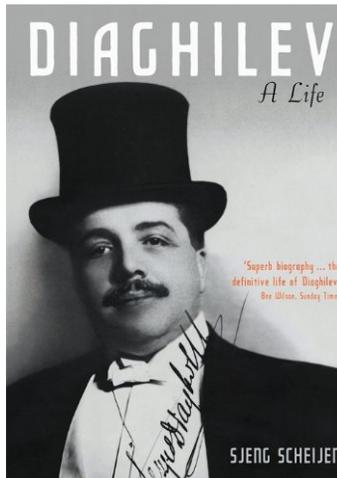
## Conner Jordan-Collins (16) YDA

Last Summer I got the chance to go to Cuba again which made that once-in-a-lifetime opportunity a twice-in-a-lifetime opportunity; suffice to say, I enjoyed myself immensely and gained more knowledge of certain aspects of ballet for example, pas de deux. The ballet in Cuba was demanding but pleasurable, with more experienced dancers and members of the ProDanza company helping and teaching me with advanced partnering technique and male variations. I was also lucky enough to dance two fun roles in the ProDanza production of Swan Lake, which was an amazing experience. I have now grown to love ballet even more.

## RECOMMENDED HOLIDAY READING



**Taking Flight: From War Orphan to Star Ballerina**  
Michaela de Prince tells her extraordinary life story. Coming from war torn Sierra Leone, she spotted a photo of a ballerina in the orphanage which was to change her life. She became world famous for her role in the documentary First Position. Her story tells of her determination to overcome racial barriers and stereotypes of conventional beauty. A must read for all ages. Just published this month.



## Diaghilev: A Life

This magnificent new biography of the extraordinary impresario of the arts, and creator of the *Ballets Russes* 100 years ago, masterfully recounts the phenomenal way in which Diaghilev reinvigorated dance and secured its future as a modern art form. He collaborated with the most progressive choreographers, dancers, designers and composers whom he impressed with his musical understanding and grasp of theatrical effects.

## WEST LONDON SCHOOL OF DANCE & YOUNG DANCERS ACADEMY

### EASTER COURSE

15 -16 -17 April 2015 (age 12 – 16)

### SUMMER SCHOOL

Senior (age 13 – 16) 22- 25 July 2015

Junior (age 8 – 12) 27 – 31 July 2015

More information will be available on our website after the 5<sup>th</sup> of January 2015

youngdancersacademy.com  
westlondonschoolofdance.co.uk

### DATES FOR THE DIARY

Nutcracker (WLS Dance & YDA)

YDA Audition full-time school:

5-6-7 December 2014

Prelims 1 March 2015

Finals 15 March 2015

YDA Associates Audition:

Mid associates (age 11-14)

1 March 2015

Junior associates (age 8 -10)

17 May 2015

Easter Course (WLS Dance & YDA)

15 -16-17 April 2015

Choreography Competition (WLS Dance & YDA)

TBC

Prize Giving YDA

3 July 2015

Summer School (WLS Dance & YDA):

Senior (age 13 -16)

22 – 25 July 2015

Junior (age 8 -12)

27 – 31 July 2015