

Dancescape South Africa (DSA) April 2019 Report

Dancescape South Africa continues to facilitate daily dance classes in April 2019 (3.00pm – 6.00pm Venue Zolani Hope Centre – Mantlane Road Zolani Ashton) engaging children in beginner and senior dance sessions. We also continued our dance classes in Ashbury at the Ashbury Civic Centre in collaboration with the RAD Foundation.

The Dancescape South Africa Directors Report:

Classes resumed on the 2nd of April after the school holidays. This month had fewer working days due to the Easter Weekend holidays. We have found that many of our regular students did not attend classes due to the fact that they were preparing for their school exams which started towards the end of the April month. As mentioned in other reports, DSA encourages our students to put time and effort into their academics and to at least pursue a Matric certificate. In the first week I finally submitted a proposal for funding to the National Arts Council. This took weeks of work as the grant proposal required a lot of documentation such as financial statements, references and certified copies before being submitted. We are also waiting for news from a grant proposal submitted last year to the Western Cape Government. Funding is going to be vital to ensure the survival of our organization and the ongoing support of those students attending further education at institutions such as the Cape Academy of Performing Arts in Cape Town.



After Kristine Elliott's visit in March she confirmed that Chuma Mathiso and Aphiwe November would be travelling to the USA in May. The two students are going to attend an intensive ballet course with the American Ballet Theatre (ABT) for a week. They have both been granted a full scholarship and Kristine has arranged through her organization called the Gugulethu Ballet Project to cover their transport and accommodation expenses for this very exciting trip. I will be accompanying the two young men on this

occasion and am also excited to learn from the experience. One of the features of this week is an intensive Bournonville workshop. This style of ballet was developed to preserve the original French ballet style before ballet was adapted into a combination of many styles in Europe. It is a very demanding form of ballet which has been known to enhance the dancer's technique and physical strength. We are always very thankful for all that Kristine has done for our dancers and wish Chuma and Aphiwe all the very best for this trip. It would be the first time that they have travelled out of South Africa and even on an airplane. Much work had to be done to apply for the visa's required to enter the United States of America. We have our interview at the US consulate in Cape Town in May and hope that all will go smoothly.



Above and below: Aphiwe November (in blue) and Chuma Mathiso in class.





Above: Aphiwe November

Below: Chuma Mathiso



The second term of the year is usually a busy time for Dancescape South Africa as in this term we prepare repertoire for many of the upcoming performances. The Youth Day Celebration performance and the Montagu Youth Arts Festival are big events on our calendar. It's a time for the resident teachers and I to have meetings to discuss which pieces will be added to the repertoire whilst also considering costumes and music. In early April we started our preparations and hope that the pieces that we have selected will show off our students and the Dancescape South Africa project in the best possible way. Kristine Elliott left us with Sinfonietta and we will no doubt add this to the repertoire. The resident teachers are busy choreographing pieces of their own and will be adding some truly classical items such as an adapted Peasant Pas De Deux and Waltz of the flowers. Much work has yet to be done and having to deal with absentee students and limited time is proving to be a challenge.



Above: Milisa Matiso and Osiphayo Peter

This month I received some awesome news from Vikram Dasgupta in Canada. Vikram came to visit us and the DSA project last year with a film crew. They were busy filming a documentary movie about Siphe November who started his dance career with our founder, the late Fiona Sargeant. He is about to finish the movie and it will be premiered at the DocEdge film festival in New Zealand soon. This is what he had to say on his facebook page:

“Super excited to announce the world premiere of BEYOND MOVING at the Oscar Qualifying DocEdge New Zealand. What started as a short doc with love and support of Canada's National Ballet school (NBS) ended up being a feature journey filmed over 3 continents for 4 years. Siphe inspired us at 14 when Jeffrey pointed him out in our display monitor and we have been running ever since to keep him in frame. Thank you Mavis Staines, Kelly Dobbin, Mama Sylvia and Fiona Sutton for your trust. We now have about three weeks to finish the film. Wish us luck. See you all at the finish line.”



Above: Siphe November featured in Vikram Dasgupta's documentary movie called Beyond Moving

The week after the Easter Weekend was a very special week for Dancescape South Africa. Sally Hanke came to visit us and spent a delightful afternoon teaching our dancers. Sally was a personal friend of the Late Fiona Sargeant. They developed their friendship whilst still at school in England. Sally who is originally from Zimbabwe, traveled all the way from Aachen, Germany to be with us. She is the director of a large dance school of over 300 students called Ballettschule Freudensprung which when translated means jump for joy. We thank you Sally for your time with our kids and hoped that you enjoyed it too.

Below: Sally Hanke teaching the senior dancers







The Resident Teachers Report:

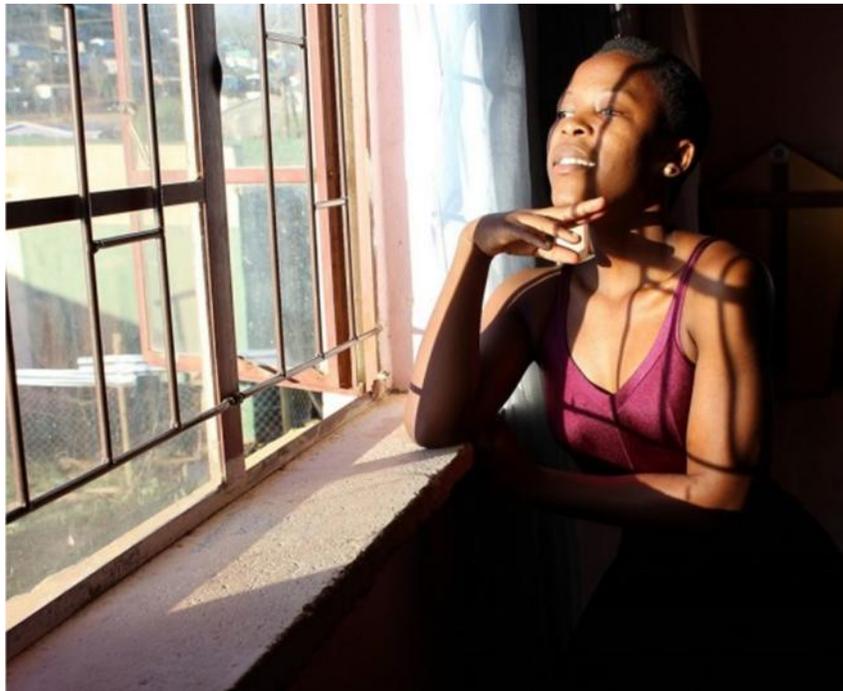
We have started working on pieces that will be performed on 15th of June 2019 for the Youth day Celebration Performance. These pieces which are technically very demanding will be performed for the first time. They have been working very hard but we know that they are capable and will become stronger dancers. We do have to also deal with many of our students that miss classes and rehearsals because of school projects and exams that they are preparing for.

We had a guest teacher from Germany, her name is Sally and she took our babies and the seniors for class, she was very impressed with the kids and so our kids also really enjoyed her classes, Sally has her own ballet school in Germany and will be showing her students a video clip of our kids in class and we are sure they will be impressed. We are very pleased with the progress of our students.

Lutho Zwedala and Lihle Mfene report back from Cape Town:

First week of this month we learning Christopher Huggins's choreography called "Enemy behind the gates" which CAPA first performed it in 2010, and the story behind it was when Christopher Huggins was at the airport and saw guards carrying guns, and he felt threatened by the guards and decided to choreograph "Enemy behind the gates" which is such an amazing ballet and I'm really excited to perform it in June. In the second week we continued with the Christopher Huggins piece but also focused on learning the history of ballet. Later in the month we learnt Cecchetti's ballet class which was really good and we really enjoy doing it.

Of course without Dancescape SA we wouldn't have had these opportunities. Thanks to Dancescape SA for their personal investment in both of us.



Once again we thank you for taking the time to read this report. Please visit our website at: <http://dancescapesouthafrica.org.za/> and follow us on social media.

Mitya Sargeant (CEO, and Director – Dancescape South Africa)