

Dancescape South Africa (DSA) January 2021 Report

The Dancescape South Africa Directors Report:

There has been no teaching this month as schools will only reopen on the 15th of February 2021 due to the Covid 19 pandemic and an adjusted level three lockdown put into place by the government. The country is experiencing a dramatic increase in new infections and deaths associated with the second wave of the pandemic due to a new more infectious variant of the virus. Dancescape South Africa hopes that our students and parents remain vigilant and do not contract the virus. This time has put severe pressure on the people of our country in particular those who are living in poverty stricken areas such as the Zolani township. Making a living to put food on the table has become even more difficult.



I have been busy preparing for the start of the new school year. When we start up again we will have to resort to limiting class numbers, as we did last year. With only 2 students per class, a teacher and his assistant allowed in the studio at one time. We are taking the virus very seriously and do not want to be responsible for spreading it in any way. We know that it is more infectious and hope to stay safe.

This month I have managed to purchase some electronic equipment such as speakers and a camera to help with our work. Speakers are always an issue as they are used daily and need to be able to keep up with the demands. A handy cam camera to assist with recording new dance pieces and to make some interesting video clips to show off our project via Youtube was also purchased. I have ordered T-shirts with our logo printed on them for all the students. Our hope is that when we do travel to either watch or perform we will be able to show off our project and all students will look well-groomed and neat. I would like to thank the Western Cape Department of Culture and Sport for providing the funds to make these purchases possible.



Left: Patricia Chamanga, our general assistant, shows off our recent purchases. A JBL XTREME2 speaker, a Canon Legria HF806 HD Camcorder and camera bag thanks to funds provided by the Western Cape Department of Culture and Sport.

I have also prepared a proposal for Ulli Bösch who has recently established a NPO in Germany called “Dance for Future” Ulli was largely responsible for our trip to Hamburg, Germany in February of 2020. He and his organization have expressed a desire to help Dancescape South Africa. I have put together a proposal regarding some of our needs including large wall mirrors for our studio and a standard outfit for our students. I hope to report some positive developments in coming months.



Above: The students who went to Hamburg, Germany last year thanks to Ulli Bösch

Regarding the students which Dancescape South Africa have been supporting over the last three years and who have until recently been training with the Cape Academy of Performing Arts (CAPA). Lihle graduated from the Cape Academy of Performing Arts last year. I am delighted to report that Lihle Mfene started work this month with the Garage Dance Ensemble under the directorship of Charles Alfred Hinkel. We wish you well Lihle and hope that that you are enjoying it. We also hope more work is to follow, well done. This will be his first professional endeavour.



As reported in previous reports CAPA closed its doors in December last year leaving the remaining two students unable to complete their course. As reported in the December 2020 report Milisa Mathiso will be attending Indoni Dance Academy which is based in Cape Town this year. However, once again due to the pandemic, Milisa is not at all sure when classes will officially start for the year. I will report back on her progress as the year develops. We are also hoping that there will be some kind of accreditation available to Milisa for attending the Indoni Academy. On the 22nd of January Lutho Zwedala auditioned for a trainee position at the Cape Town City Ballet Company. Debbie Turner, the former director of CAPA and who is the director of the City Ballet Company, has thrown Lutho a little bit of a life line and assured Lutho that if he is accepted into the trainee program at the Cape Town City Ballet he could be accredited with the certificate, at the end of 2021, that he would have received if able to complete his final year with CAPA. Therefore there does seem to be some hope for the remaining two to continue their training in Cape Town. We are waiting for the results of the audition and will report back if Lutho has been accepted or not in the next report. Lutho would work for the City Ballet company as a trainee and would not be paid therefore Dancescape would once again be supporting him with his accommodation and living expenses for this year. DSA will also be supporting Milisa with her accommodation fees.



Above: Lutho Zwedala waiting for his audition results at the Cape Town residence.

This month I also arranged a meeting with our resident teacher, Nqaba Mafilika, where we discussed the year ahead. Nqaba remains committed to his teaching and told me that he has been making strong bonds with the students and seen a satisfactory personal growth in each of them over the last year, which he is very pleased about. He hopes to go from strength to

strength and expects the attendance numbers to increase this year. The kids are seeing the value of the classes and it keeps them coming back for more. Thank you Nqaba for your ongoing commitment to the youth in the Zolani Township and to preserving the Fiona Sargeant Legacy.

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)



Above: Lihle Mfene, centre, with other cast members of the Garage Dance Ensemble.