

Dancescape South Africa (DSA) March 2019 Report

Dancescape South Africa continues to facilitate daily dance classes in March 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:

This month saw the end of the first school term however in the first week of school holidays we were very fortunate to have the world acclaimed ballerina and teacher Kristine Elliott as our guest teacher. She worked with the senior group and it was no doubt an incredible week for all. Kristine came all the way from San Francisco, USA, and brought with her Adwa Makanda a dancer and teacher from Cape Town. Kristine focused on the ballet technique and Odwa the contemporary work. She devoted a lot of time to the teaching of part of a famous modern ballet work called Sinfonietta. Kristine was able to do this for us after asking permission from the choreographer himself who is the world renowned Jiří Kylián. Jiří, originally from Czechoslovakia has worked and choreographed for many decades with the Nederlands Dans Theater in Holland. Whilst in his youth and travelling outside of his homeland the former USSR had taken control of Czechoslovakia. The borders were shut down and nobody was allowed to leave or enter the Czechoslovakia leaving Mr Kylián stranded and unable to return to his homeland. This experience inspired Jiří to create his piece entitled Sinfonietta with the message that he could be free where ever he was. Kristine taught and rehearsed the first part of the ballet to our students. It's a technically demanding ballet and the students were challenged. I must say that by the end of a tough week of work it was beginning to take shape and we will be delighted to add it to our repertoire. It will no doubt be performed throughout the year ahead. Thank you so much to Kristine and Odwa for giving of their time so freely to give these impoverished children such a wonderful opportunity and experience.



Above: The dancers demonstrating the Port de Bras section of Kristine Elliott's class



Above: Kristine Elliott teaching our DSA Students

In that same week our two Cape Academy of Performing Arts students popped in for a visit. Lihle Mfene and Lutho Zwedala spoke to me about how they were getting on at the academy. Lutho who entered his first year had found it to be hard work but has settling down well. Lihle who is in his second is enjoying this year more. It was great to chat and offer encouragement and advice to these young men who are looking to make a career in the dance. The demands of classes and rehearsals will no doubt prepare both of them well.



Above: Lutho Zwedala, Lihle Mfene and Kristine Elliott at the time of their visit

On Saturday the 16th of March the Dancescape South Africa dancers were invited to perform at the Eroica cycle event. Thank you Mareletta from the Montagu-Ashton Tourism office for yet another opportunity for our students to dance. The audience consisted of those who had completed the cycle events and their family and friends. We performed "Thoughts at a rehearsal" a piece which had made it premier last year at the "A Festive Celebration" show. Several people approached me after the performance and congratulated us for the high standard of the students.





Above and below: The Dancescape South Africa dancers performing at this year's Eroica cycle event.





As cyclists' arrived DSA performed. The dancers then enjoyed a meal together. The afternoon was enjoyed by all who attended.

The Resident Teachers Report:

We had a performance on the 16th of March at the KWV building in Montagu as part of the entertainment at the Eroica cycle event. Our kids worked hard because some of our senior boys had left us to study further and the younger ones have had to replace them, so there was a lot of pressure on them, but they did well and we had a great show.

On Monday the 18th of March Kristine Elliott arrived to teach the students a technical demanding piece called Sinfonietta choreographed by Jiří Kylián from Nederlands Dans Theater, she also brought with Odwa Makanda a local contemporary teacher and choreographer who gave them contemporary class for the week. He also choreographed a piece for them.



Above and below: Classical ballet class with Kristine Elliott.



They had a tough week with really good ballet classes that started at 10 am in the mornings with Kristine and then rehearsal of the Jiří Kylián piece, they then had to work with Odwa until 5 pm, this was a tough week but our kids made us proud because both Kristine and Odwa were very impressed with them.



Above and below: Odwa Makanda working with the DSA students in the contemporary style



They had a little show for the parents to come see the work the kids had learned for the week on Saturday the 23rd of March and it was a successful day and we are very thankful for Kristine and Odwa for the works that they have left us that can be used in our next performances.



Above: Our male dancers beginning to looking great.

Lutho Zwedala and Lihle Mfene report back from Cape Town:

The first week of this month was about polishing Michelle Reid's choreography "Contraband" and Daniela Di Lorenzo's choreography La Final Eclatante for the Western Province Association performance called "Showcase of Dance"

The second week of this month was a performance week, and lots of dress rehearsals and stage placing's. It was an amazing experience. We all had to stay focused.

The last three days of this term we did our exams for the term. Thanks to Dancescape SA and all those who have helped fund this organization for their investment in 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)