

Dancescape South Africa (DSA) September 2019 Report

Dancescape South Africa continues to facilitate daily dance classes in September 2019 (3.00pm – 6.00pm Venue Zolani Hope Centre – Mantlane Road Zolani Ashton) engaging children in beginner and senior dance sessions.

The Dancescape South Africa Directors Report:

The month of September was an exciting month. It started with the arrival of Nqaba Mafilika. Nqaba was one of our founding members, the late Fiona Sargeant's, first pupils when she started her work with the Dance for All organization many years ago in Khayalitsha, Cape Town. Nqaba like so many of her pupils went on to excel as a performer dancing all around the world and I am very proud to announce that he will be our new resident teacher.



Above: *Nqaba Mafilika demonstrates whilst teaching.*

Nqaba Mafilika attended school in Kyayelitsha at the time that the late Fiona Sargeant was teaching for the “Dance for All” project. Several of his friends who were in Fiona’s classes encouraged Nqaba to attend. He knew nothing about dancing and thought that it would be much like Karate which he had seen on TV and wanted to try it. He did and immediately showed a natural talent.



Above: *Nqaba teaching our youngest dancers.*

After four years of training with Fiona he was selected to join others from his dance class to attend school at Alexandra Sinton in Athone. The groups of mostly boys were given a special scholarship to attend this school which offered dance as a Matric subject. In the afternoons the famous world renowned Prima Ballerina, Phyllis Spira continued their dance training. Her involvement with the project brought much interest from far and wide including from former American Ballet Theatre star, Kristine Elliott. The kids were exposed to teachers and choreographers from all over the world. This led to many of the students being given opportunities to attend international dance intensive courses. In 2005 it was Nqaba turn to travel and he attended three months of dance classes at the Richard Gibson studio in California. Nqaba was one of four dancers selected to tour to France, UK and New Zealand in 2006 and 2007 in collaboration with the Buskaid Soweto String Ensemble.

In 2008 Kristine Elliott invited Nqaba to dance in Vancouver, Canada alongside stars of the San Francisco Ballet. In 2009 he attended classes at the iconic Alvin Ailey studios in New York. In 2010 South Africa hosted the soccer world cup. In that year Nqaba founded his own small dance company called "Nqaba and Friends". They took advantage of the excitement of the world cup and performed on several occasions, raising money for township projects.

In 2011 he worked for Theo Ndindwa, founder of the Ikapa Dance Theatre. During this time he began to develop his love for teaching. In 2015 he worked with the South African Dance Trust

under the directorship of Veronica Paeper. Soon after this Nqaba formed a social services project called “Nqaba Mafilika South Africa Community Development” or NMSACD. The project teaches dance classes in the townships of Cape Town.



We hope that Nqaba enjoys being part of the Dancescape South Africa project and we thank him for choosing to work with us.



Above & below: *DSA dancers at the ballet barre.*



Above: *Young dancers show off their new leotards thanks to donations received.*

As mentioned in earlier reports, Thimna Ndwe traveled to the USA in July of this year. She continues her dance training under the watchful eye of Kristine Elliott in California. I am delighted to tell you that she recently auditioned at the Menlowe Ballet in Menlo Park California and they offered Thimna the parts of Caroler and the Chimney Sweep in the professional production of “It’s a Wonderful Nutcracker” This is how the company described the production as mentioned on their website. “It’s a Wonderful Nutcracker blends the magic and wonder of a traditional Nutcracker with the heartwarming message from Frank Capra’s 1940’s film, It’s a Wonderful Life, The result brings two of the world’s most heralded holiday classics together in a clever way that is warm, funny and uniquely entertaining. “ Congratulations Thimna, hope you are enjoying every minute of your stay in the States.



Above: *Thimna Ndwe with Kristine and colleagues (left) and with Ciara and Nathan Bartman (right). Below:* *Thimna with Kristine Elliott.*



On Friday the 20th of September we performed at the KWV Auditorium in The Montagu Makiti Variety Stage Show, otherwise known as Mime Time. All the dancers received a delicious hamburger and chips. I was given the opportunity to present our project to a receptive audience. Dancescape then performed "Are you ready" and it was enjoyed by all. On Saturday the 21st of September Dancescape South Africa was part of the Heritage Day Celebrations also held at the KWV Building in Montagu. In keeping with the theme of Heritage day we performed two traditional dances. Africa Mtikitiki choreographed and played the drums for his own piece. Aviwe November choreographed the second item. We shared the stage with many other groups of performers and it was a fun afternoon as seen **below**.





This month we are preparing for the Baxter Dance Festival to be held on the 5th of October at the Baxter Theatre in Rosebank, Cape Town. DSA have been given the opportunity to perform “Are You Ready”, a dance piece choreographed by Lutho Zwedala who is studying at CAPA and whom Dancescape South Africa supports along with Lihle Mfene. The Baxter Dance Festival is a fabulous opportunity to show off our talented dancers. Rehearsals for the festival have been in full swing and with only 4 days in early October to do final preparations we hope to have a well-polished and vibrant piece to perform. Will no doubt report back on this in the October report.

In the final week of September the studio at the Zolani Hope Centre closed for school holidays. We will commence all classes on the 1st of October. We hope our students have a good break and are well rested and ready for the final term of the year. All the best for those preparing for their matric exams.



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)