

Dancescape South Africa June 2018 Report

Daily dance classes continued throughout most of June 2018 (3.00pm – 6.00pm Venue Zolani Hope Centre –Mantlane Road Zolani Ashton) engaging children in beginner and senior dance sessions. We continue to facilitating dance classes in Ashbury at the Ashbury Civic Centre initiated and in collaboration with the RAD Foundation. Classes stopped on the 22nd of June in line with the end of the national school term dates. However some of the students will be attending a winter school in the first week of the holidays.

The Youth Day Celebration Performance:

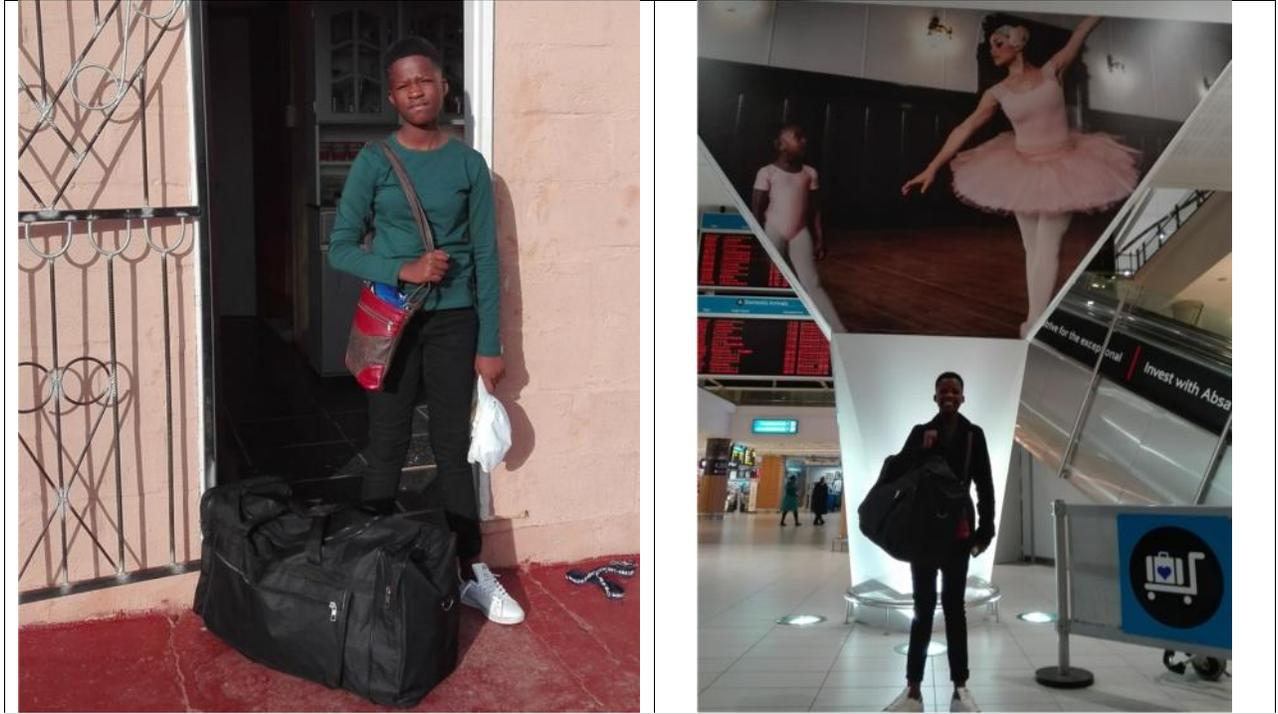
On the 16th of June our Dancescape South Africa students performed at this years Youth Day Celebration. The Langeberg Kultuurkis Show was held at the Happy Valley Community Centre in Bonnievale and was organized by Helen Goodeson of the Rural Arts Development Foundation. It was once again a collaboration of several local performers. On this exciting Saturday afternoon our dancers enjoyed performing three pieces from our growing repertoire. Their hard work over the last month at class and rehearsals resulted in an excellent performance.





Thimna Ndwe leaves for the USA:

On the 17th of June I took one of our students, Thimna Ndwe, to the Cape Town International Airport. Thimna was selected by former American Ballet Theatre Ballerina Kristine Elliot to attend the San Francisco Ballet summer school held in San Francisco. Apart from ballet technique classes, Thimna will also have pas de deux, repertory, character, pantomime, contemporary and dance conditioning training. We are very proud of Thimna who attends daily classes and rehearsals at the Dancescape South Africa studio in Zolani. Through her hard work and dedication she is now able to be given an opportunity to learn from some of the best dancers in the world.



Above: Thimna Ndwe leaving home and at the airport.



Above: Thimna with Linathi from the Gugulethu ballet project (centre) and Olwethu (far left), their chaperone on this journey of a lifetime.



Above: Timna receiving her first ever ballet point shoes.

The Garden Route Winter School:

The Garden Route Winter School was held in George from the 25 – 28th of June 2018. Three of our male students attended the dance intensive. It was a fantastic opportunity for Ayakhanya Mase, Lutho Zwedala and Anele Bizwaphi to be trained by a faculty of national and international teachers. Their teachers for the week were: Vincent Hantam, Nicolette Loxton, Mervyn Williams, Gregg Alexander, Karen Butler and Kristy Brown. The three young men were given classes in classical, repertoire, pas de deux and allied dance styles. Mime, stage costuming, stage make-up was also offered and they were given a performance opportunity at the end of the course to showcase their hard work. This is what one of our students had to say about their time in George:

Anele Bizwaphi: “Being in the Winter school was an amazing experience and I’ve learnt a lot. Now I know how to work with a girl in pointe shoes, how to hold her body from falling. I finally did a full class of jazz and jazz repertoire as it was new to me I enjoyed it. A brilliant classical contemporary that we were taught at the school was an amazing experience. And ballet piece which I was a doing a part of being a jester was very nice I enjoyed performing it.

Winter school taught me a lot, I now know almost everything in dance because of winter school thanks a lot for the invitation hope to be invited again next year.”



Above: Left, Vincent Hantam in top row centre with our Dancescape South Africa Students next to him. Right, Mervyn Williams with Anele and Lutho.

We would like to thank Louise Kent for making this possible for our young male dancers to attend. Also a big thank you to Abbi Geldenhuis and the organizers and staff of the Garden Route Winter School.



Above: Abbi Geldenhuis, Anele Bizwaphi, Ayakhanya Mase, Louse Kent and Lutho Zwedala

Lihle Mfene attends the Grahamstown Festival:

We are very excited to report that Lihle Mfene attended his first visit to Grahamstown Festival in late June and early July this year, Lihle sent me this text message after one of his performances. This is what he had to say:



Above: Lihle, (back) with friends and colleagues at the Grahamstown Festival

"Hello Teacher Mitya, hope all is well with you. This month has changed my way of doing things and my way of thinking. It was all about exams and rehearsals for GRAHAMSTOWN, which made me realize how blessed I am to be part of Cape Academy of Performing Arts (CAPA) and Dancescape South Africa. My first day in GRAHAMSTOWN was so much fun. My friends and I went to a restaurant to get something to eat, however my second day was all about performances, where I got to watch Cape Dance Company (CDC), what an amazing performance. The next day was my turn to shine, also an amazing performance, which reminded me of a beautiful woman "Fiona", a woman that changed my life from nothing, to something. Thanks to Dancescape SA and all those who have made donations to DSA for investment in me."

The Dancescape South Africa resident teachers report:

This month has been a very exciting month for us and the kids who worked hard for the youth day performance, but it was well worth it. They made us proud and performed like professionals and many people wanted to know more about Dancescape South Africa. They all love to perform and showed their dedication by being ready for classes early in the last week of school when they could've been doing lots of other things, but they showed dedication and were already waiting for us to arrive for class.

The little ones also took part in the youth day performance and did a great job on stage. We will be working hard to build the relationship between teachers and students and to build trust between them.

Three of our senior boys went to a winter school in George for a week. Aya, Anele and Lutho had a great time there and we hope that they will bring back some of what they learned to share with their fellow students and friends.

We will be starting with classes and rehearsals during the last week of school holidays because there is little time before the Montagu Arts Festival. They will be performing several pieces and we have some new works by Lutho and Anele that we are hoping to present at festival as well.

The classes in Ashbury are also getting bigger and kids are being consistent. They love to dance and our job is to take that passion and shape it into an art and to keep the love for it going.

Finally, I was involved in an accident on the 17th of June. It happened just outside Ashton after returning from the Cape Town International Airport. Earlier that evening I had taken Thimna Ndwe to the airport to catch her flight to the USA. Soon after 10pm on that Sunday night I swerved out of the way of an oncoming car which was on my side of the road. If I had not swerved in time there could have been a fatal head on collision. The damages to our Dancescape car was a broken rear view mirror and dents on the side of our car. The driver of the other car did not stop but continued to drive away at speed from the scene of the accident.

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)