



**York School of Dance & Drama**

# Winter 2005 Newsletter



**Welcome** to our winter newsletter, sponsored by the Friends. The summer seems a long time ago as we wrap up and spend darkened afternoons and evenings back in the groove of classes and rehearsals for the forthcoming show in February. As the dance and drama for ***The Children Of The Lost Planet*** unfolds it is an exciting time but it also gives us plenty of food for thought about how this year's natural disasters have impacted upon on so many people and our fragile earth.

Happily we have plenty of stories inside to warm your cockles, so get the hot buttery toast within reach and read on...



## **Winter Edition Content:**

- ***Lesley Ann is inside out***
- ***Sally Miller steps in time***
- ***Derek Fowlds – YSDD Patron supporting from the wings***
- ***School Soap Box... congratulations to Emma Bellerby***
- ***Did you know?***
- ***Friends Excellence Awards - who won what?***
- ***School Stuff – new classes.***



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Visit our website at:

[www.yorkdanceanddrama.org.uk](http://www.yorkdanceanddrama.org.uk)

***“Nullos Limos”***

# Lesley Ann's bit... *Inside Out*

Recently, my work took me back to Epidavros in Greece, where I have been many times to teach students the ancient art of Greek Choral Speaking and Movement. It is a great honour to have the opportunity to stand in the centre of the great amphitheatre and deliver my lecture on the unique acoustics and acting techniques pertinent to that amazing space!



The Theatre dates back to 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C. and seats over 2,000 people. It is interesting to note that it was first built as a healing sanctuary to the god Asklepios, and during long performances - lasting six hours or more - open surgery took place just below the stage. Patients were wheeled in and out amidst the grand spectacle and everyone accepted that the performance would send out healing vibrations. People attended the performances in order that the whole person (the psyche) would be reborn as they experienced all the major emotions during the grand spectacular. This was the birth of our modern psychology: the idea of outside stimulus affecting the inner person for the better.

The Stanislavsky Method School of acting is based on similar principles. A friend, who was working as the continuity girl on a Dustin Hoffman film, told me that he is a great exponent of this technique. All he had to do was walk through a door and say, "...It's cold!" She watched him do this several times, the first time he entered with his coat on (he didn't feel cold enough); the second with his coat off (he began to feel colder); finally he told the crew to hang on while he went outside - the filming was in Scotland and there was a thick carpet of snow on the ground. Apparently Dustin rubbed snow over his face and finally entered, delivering his lines the third time feeling truly cold! This is an example of working "outside in" as we call it in the business!

Dance is different. The wonderful essence of a great dancer comes firstly from inside. I was explaining this to my Tuesday girls telling them that to just copy steps and sequences is not enough, you have to feel the sheer joy of the dance from inside! This is what radiates out to the audience and allows them to share your own wonderful experience – dancers work "inside out!" The girls listened and I watched with joy as they began to let go and allow their feelings to shine through, thus improving the quality of their dance enormously.

Later, I happened to be passing the changing room and overheard a conversation...

*"You've got your jumper on inside out."*

*"Lesley says it's OK, it's what dancers do!"*

I hope everyone has a wonderful Christmas and joyful New Year!

*Lesley Ann Eden*

# Steps in time...

*Sally Miller is one of the YSDD Senior Performers and is herself, a teacher of dance.*

I have been dancing since around 6 years old and I don't really know how it happened as no-one in my family has ever really danced before. I do remember, aged 11, asking my Mum if I could join a local dance class because it was only £3 for 2 ½ hours AND you got a free drink!

Now, at 32 my love and need for dancing has only strengthened and I feel lucky that I can combine dance in all aspects of my life. I have taught dance at Driffield School for the past five years as part of the school's curriculum for 7 to 13 year olds and also offer extra curricular activities after school. My work with YSDD is an opportunity for dance at my own level, for myself, and also fulfils my love of performing. There are very few people or situations that can come between me and my dancing – believe me many have tried and they've all failed!



As a teacher I can share my skills and pass them on to other budding dancers, I also get to work creatively: choreographing pieces for GCSE and A' level students. I have often been asked about being a professional dancer and for a time I thought seriously about taking up a university place to train; however, I would be unhappy about someone stripping me of my skills and talent and changing it into something they wanted me to be. I was worried that my individuality as a dancer would be taken away but today I feel like I have the best of everything and I do realise how lucky I am.



Having taught dance to young children and teenagers I understand when students are torn between socialising with friends and attending a dance class. When I was growing up and still at school my dance classes were on a Friday night, when most of my friends were going out. I rarely felt torn about what to do as I simply joined them wherever they were afterwards and my friends always accepted that. It meant a great deal to me when my friend Andrew told me that he, and the rest of our group, were really proud of me because I always managed to stay committed to my dancing and my friends – it meant even more because it came from “one of the lads”! By sharing this with you I suppose I'm trying to say that if you are committed to your dancing, don't be ashamed of it or worry that you might have to miss the odd party; your friends will only respect you even more in the end.

## Sally's Top Tips

Understand “strength” and be aware of your posture and centre. You need to have good strength throughout your body and to be able to have balance and control. Good dancing should look effortless and free of tension.

All movement comes from the torso, and in particular the abdominal area. Your abdominals (tummy muscles) need to be strong to support your body in any position, without this strength dancing can look lazy and sloppy.

Do at least 10 sit-ups and press-ups a day. You'll soon notice a real difference in your posture and dancing in general.

Dance with your body and your mind.

When getting ready to perform make sure you can see yourself dancing the routine perfectly in your mind...don't just think, “I'll do my best” – by **seeing** the dance perfectly in your mind and **feeling** the movements perfectly in your body, your performances will feel much better and look amazing!

Look after yourself.

Eat properly (a little and often throughout the day – plenty of fruit and veg.) and drink loads of water.



I find it quite hard to define the best thing about dancing for me. I really enjoy performing and giving my friends and family something to be proud of. My best friend tells me she has to remember to breathe when she watches me because somehow I “take her breath away”?!

Dancing with Lesley Ann is my time out: time for me to relax, turn off and let the dancing take over. Sometimes after a long day at work it can be hard to find the energy, but I always do and feel better for it. I am lucky that the steps come easily to me, it makes sense and I couldn't be without it.

Dancing needs energy, commitment and creativity, but don't worry it isn't all giving on your part. You'll get fun, friendships, fitness and a great skill in return – many things that a lot of people will be jealous of.

**YOU have the ability to entertain and amaze so keep on loving it...**

**... just keep on DANCING!**

*Sally Miller*

Photos – Kate Mallender [www.katemallender.com](http://www.katemallender.com)

# Gallery

*Here's Edward's (Aged 6) drawing of Lesley Ann in her dancing boots!*



*Please let us have your artwork; we'd love to display it for you.*

# In the wings...



**Derek Fowlds** is the School's proud Patron and to find out more about how he became involved in the school's work, we caught up with him at the end of the summer.

Picture the scene...Derek - well known actor and TV celebrity on hols in Tenerife. Having enjoyed a few rounds of golf Derek is now, toes up, relaxing under a palm tree, sipping a long, cool, parasol-laden beverage.

A waiter approaches Derek's deck chair...

*"Excuse me Sir, there's a lady who'd like to speak to you about the occult."*

Not your everyday starter for ten, but then Lesley Ann is anything other than everyday. We can only imagine that Derek, completely bemused but ever ready to lend a hand, sat down with a bubbly, blonde stranger to discuss the dark arts and three years later ended up as Patron and supporter of our school.

Back in the UK and Lesley Ann invited Derek to see *Alice In Wonderland* at the Grand Opera House and was further delighted when she asked him to become our Patron. He was greatly impressed by the dedication, enthusiasm and quality of all the performers and is really happy to be associated with the school.

Virgo and lifetime Chelsea fan, as a student at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA) where he trained, Derek loved musicals and although his career hasn't followed that path he still sings and his favourite musical is *A Chorus Line*. He also "cut a rug" when he was younger and shimmied his way through many a ballroom dance routine and has great admiration for Lesley Ann and all the pupils when they perform.

In his role as Patron he hopes that having a well-known "name" about will help raise the profile of the school, he's happy to admit to anyone who'll listen that he is a fan and is keen to support us in all our endeavours. With the next show coming up in February, Derek has volunteered to come into rehearsals to help pupils with diction and projection: it is a fundamental element of any spoken performance to ensure the people at the back can hear just as well as those in at the front and he's very happy to give any help and advice he can.

Derek is often up in Leeds due to his filming commitments as a regular on ITV's *Heartbeat* but he has recently taken time out to work for his sons as they filmed their own short film, *Pigeon Post* – a wartime romance that will be shown at film festivals next year.

Thanks to Derek for this interview, we all look forward to seeing him in our rehearsals and, of course, supporting us at the Grand Opera House for the show in February.

*Oh, and by the way... they never did get round to talking about the occult...*



# Did you know?

10% of the UK population is dancing\*

\*[www.danceuk.org](http://www.danceuk.org)

**A thought for Christmas:** The Prince lifts the Sugar Plum Fairy 10 times, performs 19 pirouettes and does 24 jumps. Every time a dancer jumps on pointe, three times her body weight is carried on the tip of her big toe\*.

\*English National Ballet

...Oh, and Ginger Rogers did everything Fred Astaire did, but she did it backwards and in high heels...



## School Soap Box...



Congratulations go to **Emma Bellerby** who, along with Elise Hart, also won a place on the Yorkshire Young Dancers Advanced Training scheme run by the Northern School of Contemporary Dance in Leeds. With two dancers on this prestigious course from YSDD we've all got lot to live up to!

Check the Northern School of Contemporary Dance at:  
[www.nscd.ac.uk](http://www.nscd.ac.uk)

*Tell us about your thoughts, achievements, gripes or interests here, email them to:*  
[info@yorkdanceanddrama.org.uk](mailto:info@yorkdanceanddrama.org.uk)

## Know your 'Friends'...

**Welcome** to all the Friends of the school and thank you so much for your support. But, who are the school's unsung heroes? You can find out as we introduce them to you in each newsletter.

**Beryl Brindley - Congleton, Cheshire.**

Beryl came to see *Time Bandits* and loved it so much she joined the Friends...

*"A most enjoyable afternoon, such enthusiasm, it was a pleasure to see the 60 strong cast thoroughly enjoying themselves. All the hard work that had been put in over the last twelve months made for a polished performance. All praise must go to Lesley-Anne for her multi talents, time and patience. The costumes were great, so too was the stage management - their timing was perfect. My last comment has to be about the tiny tots - I just loved their concentration!"*

## Friends' Excellence Awards 2005 and End of Year Picnic!



*Gorgeous girls...*

The Friends sponsored 4 annual awards for children who may have overcome a particular difficulty, achieved a personal goal or made an extra special contribution.

**Thank you to everyone** who came along to the picnic, the rain held off, the food was great and plentiful; it is rumoured that a lucky few still have a box of John's mini scotch eggs in their freezers...



**George Davies** received the achievement award for Pre-Beginner Dance and here he is with Lesley Ann and mum, Wendy, who dances with the Senior Performers.

The award for achievement in Beginner Dance went to **Sarah Stevens**.



The best achiever in Drama went to **Shannon Stead**.

And last, but by no means least is **Tia Hancy**, who won the award for achievement in Intermediate Dance.



**Really well done to all our award winners, who'll be in the spotlight next year?**

Thanks to Kate Mallender for photographs.



Thank you to all our Friends – aunts, uncles, grandparents, godparents, carers, mums, dads and industry professionals...

# Join In!

**Become a Friend!** For just **£20 a year** you'll get our regular newsletter and invitations to exclusive events as well as supporting and furthering the work of the school. Contact Jacky Tel: (01904) 622 326 or Email [info@yorkdanceanddrama.org.uk](mailto:info@yorkdanceanddrama.org.uk) for a membership form.

## School Stuff...



**Dates for your diary...**

Here's our handy '*rip out and stick on your wall*' page!

School Principal:	Lesley Ann Eden Tel: 07971 230 716	<i>Kidscape Champion B.Ed. Dance Drama B.Ed. Music M.A. Choreography</i>	
Secretary:	Val Hart Tel: 01347 824 719	<a href="mailto:info@yorkdanceanddrama.org.uk">info@yorkdanceanddrama.org.uk</a>	
Classes*:	Park Grove Community School, Park Grove, York.		
	Tuesday	4.15 – 5.00pm	Beginner Dance
	Tuesday	5.00 – 6.00pm	Intermediate Dance
	Tuesday	6.00 – 6.30pm	Invitation Performers
	Tuesday	6.45 – 8.45pm	Senior Performers
	Thursday	5.00 – 6.00pm	Beginner Youth Dance 10-13yrs
	Thursday	6.00 – 7.00pm	Adult beginners - Tap
	Thursday	7.00 – 8.00pm	Adult beginners – Jazz
	Saturday	9.15 – 10.15am	Beginner Elementary Dance
	Saturday	10.15 – 11.15am	Drama Group
	Saturday	11.15 – 12.30pm	Intermediate Dance

*\*Check term dates with Lesley Ann Eden or Val Hart.*

Class Fees: £5 per class £8 per double

Show 2006: *Children Of The Lost Planet*

Dress Rehearsal: 8<sup>th</sup> February, 3.30pm onwards.  
Performances: 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> February 2006  
Grand Opera House, York

*Tickets now on sale...*



# Academy News



**The Jorvik Arts Academy** is open for business to give students, the opportunity to explore excellence in the field of **ART, DANCE DRAMA AND MUSIC**, whilst giving them a unique opportunity to discover the historic delights of York – England's second city. Weekends, or longer stays are available together with any combination of Arts tuition, tailored to suit any needs. Other specialist courses can be devised such as history visits or language courses in Spanish or French.

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**10% discount available for pupils of Y.S.D.D.**

Spring Newsletter will be out in March – editorial contributions to Jacky Frere  
[info@yorkdanceanddrama.org.uk](mailto:info@yorkdanceanddrama.org.uk) [www.yorkdanceanddrama.org.uk](http://www.yorkdanceanddrama.org.uk)  
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