

# **BA Sixth Form**

## **Dance Transition Booklet**



# **Miss G Jones**

# Dance within the Performing Arts Industry

Common misconceptions made for those wishing to or studying dance are the breadth of careers available within the industry.

- Choreographer
- Community Dance Practitioner
- Company Director
- Dance Performer: Contemporary companies, commercial sector, cruise ships, musical theatre, etc.
- Dance/Arts officer
- Dance Movement Therapist
- Dance Journalist
- Dance Historian
- Dance Teacher/Lecturer: private and public sectors
- Marketing for Dance Companies
- Management Specialist
- Press and Public Relations Specialist
- Events Planner
- Dance Administrator
- Dance Psychologist
- Youth Worker
- Primary School Teacher
- Dance Film Maker
- Academic Researcher
- Dance Photographer/Videographer
- Dance project coordinator
- Dance company outreach
- Personal Trainer/Fitness Instructor
- Lighting designer/Technical Production
- Costume Designer
- Dance Foundation and Funding Specialist
- Notation/Choreology

It is important as a dance artist to understand the variety of roles within industry in order to develop skills and knowledge for a 'portfolio' dance career. Inevitably you will not always want or be able to perform, therefore will have to undertake a variety of jobs within the industry.

# Life as a Performer

The work of a professional dancer requires time and dedication to training, developing and improving the tools of the trade. In a dance context, the tools being the body and creative and intellectual skills needed to interpret the performance material to communicate with and entertain an audience.

## **TASK:**

Investigate the lifestyle of a performer. Create a power point presentation (create 1-2 slides for each subheading below) that **evaluates** the key features of the role and skills of a performer through effective exploration, comparing and contrasting well-chosen examples of working practices to support findings. Use the below questions to generate information for each slide for your presentation.

## **PURPOSE:**

The preparatory work provided can be used for the first unit (2: Developing Skills and Techniques for Live Performance) of your Level 3 BTEC Dance course.

### **1. Different Roles of the Performer**

It is important to consider and discuss the variety of roles a performer must adopt to sustain income and longevity within the industry:

- Preparing for and attending auditions and casting sessions;
- Attending rehearsals and engaging in the choreographic process
- Performing to live audiences and for television, film and music video productions;
- Studying and creating choreography;
- Learning and using other skills such as singing and acting - many roles, for example in musical theatre, require a combination of performance skills;
- Looking after costumes and equipment;
- Teaching dance, either privately or in the public sector;
- Working in dance development and promotion, encouraging and enabling people, especially children, to become involved in dance and to understand and appreciate it;
- Running workshops in the community, for example with groups of disabled people;
- Undertaking administrative, promotional or stage management work, particularly in a small company or if setting up your own company;
- Liaising with arts and dance organisations, theatres and other venues regarding funding and contracts.
- Self-promotion is also a significant feature of the work. This can include sending out your CV or photographs and footage, delivering presentations, running workshops or attending auditions and meetings.

### **2. Formal Training and Progression Routes**

- Which routes can be taken to become a performer?
- Find examples of different Universities (Middlesex, Roehampton, etc), Conservatoires (Trinity Laban, The Place, Northern Contemporary), Colleges and institutions (Urdang, Bird, London Studio Centre, Performers, etc). What are the similarities/differences of each.
- Different courses available- degrees, diplomas, certificates. What are the differences/similarities in each qualification?
- What are the benefits/risks of each course?
- What apprenticeships are available? What are the benefits/risks of undergoing an apprenticeship?

- Which routes do you think are most effective to becoming a performer? Why?
- Provide examples of performers within the industry as case studies to evaluate their training route and impact it has had on their career.

### **3. Employment Opportunities and Trends**

- What jobs are available to performers?
- How/where do performers find out about auditions?
- Creating a portfolio.
- What happens during the audition process? Compare examples of the audition process from two professional dance company (E.g. Vardimon & Hofesh).
- What are the different contracts available to performers? What do performers need to do in between contracts?
- Discuss the relationships formed within the industry between choreographers and dancers and how this can affect employment opportunities.

### **4. Lifestyle of a Dancer-Personal and Employability Skills**

Evaluate the different lifestyle, training and practical skills required from a performer. What do you perceive to be the most important? Why?

- Maintaining a healthy lifestyle.
- Managing life between contracts (portfolio careers)
- Keeping in training/professional class to continue professional development. Where can you undergo this training?
- Knowledge of dance and its related issues
- Personal skills such as-Perseverance, motivation, discipline, resilience
- Versatility
- Thorough knowledge of dance and its related issues;
- motivation and discipline;
- Communication and interpersonal skills;
- Creativity;
- Confidence and self-belief;
- The ability to adapt to the different disciplines of TV, film and theatre;
- Working in front of a camera
- team working skills;
- Response to direction and feedback;
- Ability to make contacts and promote current work

### **5. Working Conditions (Case Study)**

You should conduct research into the working practices of a professional dance company or performing artist. It is advised that you interview a dance artist. The companies you may wish to investigate can be selected from the below:

- Boy Blue Entertainment
- New Adventures (Matthew Bourne)
- Jasmine Vardimon Dance Company
- Hofesh Shechter Dance Company
- Any independent artists you know of currently performing in the industry.

You should research or carry out an interview with the dancer to conduct a case study that identifies, discusses and evaluates the following:

- Working Hours
- Pay
- Touring

- Rehearsal/creative process
- How do they source work (Agencies AMCK, Spotlight, etc)
- Training- how do they continue professional development
- How do they maintain a healthy lifestyle?
- Do they have to carry out outreach educational work as part of the company?
- TV/Film/Commercial work (if appropriate)
- Evaluate the importance of being versatile in order to gain work.
- Evaluate what they find most challenging as a dancer/performer.

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