



DANCESCAPE SOUTH AFRICA

Uplifting People Through Dance

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3rd Quarter Report for Dancescape South Africa July to September 2021

Daily dance classes continued during school term times in July to September of 2021 (3.00pm – 6.00pm Venue Zolani Hope Centre – Mantlane Road Zolani Ashton) engaging children in beginner and senior dance sessions. However there were days and sometime weeks where the studio was closed due to the Pandemic. Dancescape South Africa (DSA) was able, through the kind donations of individuals and organizations to employ 1 full time resident teacher. We were also able to provide stipends for 1 trainee teachers and pay for the services of a director / administrator and a general assistant. We continue to provide the transport, living and accommodation costs for two students studying in Cape Town. Without financial support we would also be unable to tend to the day to day running costs. We thank all who have made it possible to preserve the Fiona Sargeant Legacy and to uplift the disadvantaged youth of our country through dance.

July 2021:

Due to the country being placed on level 4 lock down restrictions and the early closure of the schools we were forced to close the studio in line with these measures. The school did however reopen on the 26th of July and classes and rehearsals resumed. This month we were shocked to learn of the passing of Africa Mtikitiki. Masonwabe Natious Mtikitiki affectionately known to us as Africa was born on the 18th of February 1985. I was told that Africa had struggled with cancer which would lead to his untimely death in July of this year. I must add that I, like many who

knew him in the Zolani community, was very sad to hearing of his death. He had worked alongside the Late Fiona Sargeant for many years to teach dance in the Zolani Community.



Above: Some of the people who attended the memorial service organized by the students to pay tribute to Africa Mtikitiki who passed away in July 2021

Africa was a very talented teacher, well respected for teaching traditional African dance. His vibrancy and energy towards his craft was amazing and as I mentioned to those who attended his memorial service, this was a man who had been taken from us far too soon. He still had so much to give to the youth of the community. Africa had in past years taught and choreographed for our organization and then in recent times we did not hear from him, no doubt due to his illness. We send our condolences to his family and friends at this time. I have many fond memories of Africa but one stands out. One afternoon Africa arrived to teach. He told me that he would be teaching an African style class which would include a barre. I was intrigued by this as I had never seen or heard of anything like this before. It was amazing to see how the ballet barre could now be used to complement an African traditional style of dance. I was very impressed, and it will be a very happy memory of this man who had given so much to the kids of our community.



***Above:** Our dancers dancing at the Africa Mtikitiki memorial service*

Africa had no doubt left an impression on our students. So much so that these students who knew him well decided to host a memorial service and on the afternoon of the 12th of July a special memorial service was held. There was dancing and some words were spoken. It was a special time of remembering this teacher who had given so much. I was so impressed that the students had taken the initiative to remember Africa and how he had made an impact on their lives.

Another wonderful moment this month was when Thimna Ndwe approached me with an incentive to give food to the local community. Sponsored by Kristine Elliott and assisted by our resident teacher food was given out to the community on Mandela Day. It was wonderful to hear how Thimna was giving back to the community. I am very happy when I see people taking the initiative to do something good for the local community. Well done Thimna and thank you.



***Above:** The local Zolani community receives a food handout on Mandela Day, initiated by Thimna Ndwe and assisted by Nqaba Mafilika.*

We are preparing for the Montagu Youth Arts Festival to be held in August of this year. Unfortunately due to the pandemic and the recent lockdown level 4 restrictions we were unable to rehearse and will only have about 2 weeks of rehearsal time left before the performance at the festival. We have 10 entries to perform this year and hope that all will go well.

August 2021:

This month was all about preparing for the Montagu Youth Arts Festival. The organizers of the event were hoping to have a normal festival with live performances and an audience, however due to Covid 19 restrictions it was decided to rather have the dance part of the festival submit dance videos, thereby making it a virtual event. We had a total of ten entries this year and the early part of the month was spent filming and editing each entry and then presenting the final version to the organizers.



This year's festival was held from the 11th to the 21st of August. We received the results on the 23rd of August. These are the results:

1. Love someone (choreographed by Phelo Ngxukuma): Double Gold
2. Amanikinike (choreographed by Liseza Magadla): Double Gold
3. Charleston (choreographed by Nqaba Mafilika): Gold
4. Izulu (choreographed by Nqaba Mafilika): Gold
5. The Unseen (choreographed by Lihle Mfene): Double Gold
6. West African(choreographed by Nqaba Mafilika): Silver
7. Le Corsaire (choreographed by Nqaba Mafilika): Double Gold
8. Sylvia (choreographed by Nqaba Mafilika): Gold Diploma
9. Chinese Dance (choreographed by Nqaba Mafilika): Double Gold
10. Russian Dance (choreographed by Nqaba Mafilika): Double Gold

Dancescape South Africa also received the following trophies:

Best Contemporary Group: Unseen

Best Ballet Solo: Chuma Mathiso

Best Ballet Duet / Trio: Chinese & Russian

Fiona du Plooy Trophy – Most Promising dancer: Aphiwe November

Best Dance Entry TROPHY – Senior: Dancescape South Africa

We are very proud of the results. This is the feedback that we received from the Judges:

“Very pleased to have the pleasure of Dancescape on board at the festival this year. We applaud Dancescape, for offering top class training to the dancers from Zolani. It is heartening to see so many young dancers continuing their training during these difficult times. Our admiration for the excellent memorization of the choreography the young dancers manage to execute with such ease. Congratulations and good wishes for the future endeavors in dance.”

- The Montagu Youth Arts Festival Judges:



Sharon Paulsen
Dance Adjudicator



Ricardo Koopman
Dance Adjudicator



September 2021:

The Dancescape South Africa Directors Report:

This month Nqaba Mafilika continued to teach our students showing his usual vibrant energy which the young dancers love and thrive off. However this month he was joined by Lihle Mfene, our guest teacher, for two weeks of teaching and choreographing. Lihle completed his course at the Cape Academy of performing arts last year and since then has had a short contract of professional work. However most likely due to the Covid Virus Pandemic work has been in short supply for him and he is struggling to make ends meet in Cape Town. With this in mind we decided to offer him some guest teaching work and I must say it's great to have him on board for the next few months.



Above: Lihle Mfene teaching our young dancers

On one afternoon I presented some of the awards we received at this year's Montagu Youth Arts festival. We are very proud of this year's virtual festivals results which were as follows:



Above and below: Students receiving some of the awards from the Montagu Youth Arts Festival



One of the problems that we seem to face is that of students who stop attending classes. We can't force the children to attend. Some of the new arrivals attend classes initially inquisitive about what dance is all about dancing. However some don't persevere and then due to whatever reason drop out. We don't know what to do about this and it's an ongoing problem. Sometimes it's due to the child having other commitments such as having to put more effort into their school work or having to do chores at home. At this time of year they are also preparing for their yearend school exams. Another scenario is that they might find that dance is hard work and prefer to play on the streets with their friends. There is however a core group who consistently attend and then other first timers who attend curious about what dance is all about. For those who are no longer attending, Nqaba has had to go out to their homes requesting that they return the dance wear issued to them earlier in the year. He tries to use this opportunity to educate the parents or guardians about what we are doing. He often time finds that the parents have no idea what their children have been up to after school and know little about our project.

This month DSA received a donation of dance wear. Tap shoes, ballet pumps, tops, skirts, shorts and leggings, leg and body warmers, some accessories and of course plenty of leotards. A grade 6 pupil from Glenwood House School in George was encouraged to choose an outreach program to support and raise awareness. Olivia is an acro dancer and wanted to support disadvantaged dance students in a way that she could. Reaching out to her class and dance studios in the area she managed to accumulate this batch of unused dance clothes. The response was really good and the hope is that she has made other children aware that there are many ways to support other children. Thank you so much Olivia for taking on this initiative. I am sure we will use all that you have given us in some way or another. Thanks again.



Above: Some of the donated dance wear we received this month.

We have received additional funding earmarked for a building project at the Zolani Hope Centre. Ulli Bosch from Dance for Future was able to secure these funds to build changing rooms for the students at the studio. Currently they are using the kitchen and the hope is to build two changing rooms into the area. It's going to require breaking through some walls, closing some doors, adding windows and building new internal walls. We have been waiting for these funds to start the project. However in recent days, Fanie, the Hope Centre Manager, expressed reservations regarding the work to be carried out. He told me that his board has recently apposed this proposal. I was able to meet with him and discussed a way forward. We also discussed how the Zolani Care Trust could ensure that we could continue to use the building as our studio. We resolved that I would draft a letter of Understanding which members of his board would sign allowing DSA to use the venue as our studio for at least another two years (2022 & 2023). I expressed to him that we would not consider financing these building changes until the letter of understanding was approved and signed by his board. Fanie will meet with his board soon to seek their approval and I will report on the outcome in subsequent reports.

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)

