

EXCEL PERFORMING ARTS

EASTER NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 1st TERM DATES 19th APRIL – 26th MAY 2010 (6 weeks)

We have had yet another exciting and busy term and hope you have all enjoyed your classes as much as we enjoy teaching them! It is fantastic to see our students not only improving but growing with confidence and having lots of fun.

Welcome back Steven!

Our Artistic Director – Steven Houghton is back after a hugely successful arena tour with the opera diva – Katherine Jenkins. For those that were unable to see the show, it was an amazing production and Steven has said it was thrilling to perform at the O2 arena in London in front of thousands.

Steven has a busy time ahead as he has been asked to adjudicate 'Miss Dance of Great Britain' and 'Master Dance' for the International Dance Teachers Association (IDTA). He will also be performing in '42nd Street' at the Chichester Festival Theatre over the summer.

Steven has missed you all and can't wait to be teaching some of the classes again.

Thank you to Ben

A huge thank you to actor Ben Richards who took time out of his busy filming schedule to teach a drama class on Wednesday 17th March to our lucky students. Ben is a very talented actor who is currently in 'The Bill'.

Ben was very impressed with the professionalism that our students showed and commented on their talent. We were very proud to show off our students and Ben has said he would love to come back and teach again at Excel Performing Arts. We will be putting lots of photos of Ben's visit on our website so keep checking it for updates. If you would like to find out about all the shows Ben has been involved in, check out his website www.benrichards.com.

New Class starting

After many requests we have decided to start a street/jazz dance class for 5 – 7 year olds starting on Monday 19th April. The class will run on Mondays and will be at **4.45pm – 5.15pm** (30 mins) and will cost £3. If you are interested in reserving a place for your child please contact me. As with all classes there will be limited places so book early to avoid disappointment. If your child is in this age bracket and is currently doing the Street Dance on Mondays at 5.15pm, you will be asked to move your child to this new class. Any queries please don't hesitate to contact me.

Congratulations!

Huge congratulations to some of our students that attend Bowmansgreen School. Bowmansgreen School entered 'The St Albans Schools Dance Competition 2010' and won!! All students in the winning dance were made up from students that attend 'Excel Performing Arts' and are Eleanor McLaughlin, Bethan Maddock, Rebecca West, Taylor Newman, Breanna Marga, Millie Stanley, Lee Rostron, and Scott Mousley-Young.

Also well done to the other 'Excel' students - Ella Houghton and Isobel Duce, who were part of the other dance group that Bowmansgreen entered and who also danced fabulously. Our students had to take some time off from afternoon lessons to rehearse and worked extremely hard. We are so proud of you -well done!

Performance Class

After Easter we will be announcing a new exciting 'Performance' class. This class will only run if 'Excel Performing Arts' has been asked to perform somewhere. The class will only be offered to students that are at least 8 years old and are already attending another dance class with 'Excel'. The type of dancing will be Street/Jazz/Musical theatre style but if you are a ballet student in this age bracket and are interested you may also put your name forward. The reason for this Performance class is so that the class will learn various dances and will produce a repertoire that they can perform at events and represent 'Excel Performing Arts' as and when required.

Students would have to be very committed to this class and would be representing 'Excel Performing Arts'. Parents need to be advised that they would also be asked to finance costumes although where ever possible we will always try and keep the cost down as much as we can.

The class will cost £5 (60 mins) and would be invoiced similarly to the other classes. At the moment of writing this newsletter we are still in talks with Bowmansgreen School as to when we can put this class on but probably we are looking at a Saturday morning so that even if Steven is in a show somewhere, he can still be very much involved.

We are also considering a Performance class for the Drama & Singing students as well.

Depending on how many people are interested we may have more than one Performance class but each class will have a limited number of places. As soon as it has been confirmed when this class will take place I will let you know. Enclosed is a form to register your interest in putting forward your child for this class if it took place on a **Saturday** morning only. Times are yet to be decided.

Please send the form to: S Payton, PO Box 912, St Albans AL1 9FF by **Friday 9th April 2010** or alternatively phone or e-mail me. To make it completely fair we will reserve 25% of each class (Mon Street, Tues Jazz & Mt Dance, Wed Jazz & MT Dance) places for the Performance class. For example no more than 5 students could be from the Wednesday Jazz class and no more than 3 from the Tuesday class. This is for only one Performance class. If we have lots of interest then we can consider having 2 Performance classes which would mean obviously more places. Places would be given on a first come, first serve basis to keep things fair and each term if the class was running would re-invite students to apply.

We hope many of you will be interested in the Performance Class and we are already thinking of ideas for dances and performance pieces! The children will be required to learn lots of dances and routines that they will perform and if your child finds this sort of thing difficult, this class may not be suitable.

Please note that **all** students will have the opportunity to perform when we put on a bi-annual show. We will be looking at various theatres soon however the majority of theatres usually book at least 12 months in advance. As soon as we have a date for your diaries no matter how far into the future, we will let you know.

Fees

Thank you to the majority of students paying promptly which greatly helps our administration and is very much appreciated.

Ballet Medals

We have decided that it would be lovely for the ballet students to work towards a medal. However I don't feel the majority are quite ready for a formal IDTA exam at the moment where we would have an external examiner come in and the children assessed in twos or threes. These formal exams would take place on Sundays and we would need a certain amount of students to enter into an exam session. It would also entail an extra lesson each week as it is impossible to prepare the children in just one half hour class. All of this and the exam fee would cost parents extra and again I don't feel we are quite ready for this at the moment.

I have decided instead we will work towards a series of 'Excel Ballet' medals starting with Bronze. This will involve the children learning the etiquette of an exam without the stress. The 'Excel Ballet' Bronze medal will be based on the steps from the IDTA syllabus for Preparatory Ballet. It will also involve learning a short dance based on a nursery rhyme.

We will do all the preparation in their normal class time as well as the actual exam itself. The date that the medal test will take place will not be until after the May half term and I will let you know the actual date in the next newsletter. So that the students get used to an external examiner coming in for when we do more formal examinations, we will invite an experienced teacher and adjudicator to be the examiner.

The idea is that the children not only work towards their Bronze medal but also learn the discipline that working towards a medal requires. Hopefully they will all come away with a feeling of achievement.

As the whole process will take place during normal class time, the cost will only be what it is for the medal itself, which is £3.50. For those that don't want to pay for a medal, then they can still be involved but will just get a certificate.

I have enclosed an 'Excel Ballet' Bronze medal agreement form which I would appreciate you completing and giving back to me. No money needs to be paid at this stage.

If you have any queries or require further information please don't hesitate to contact me.

Have a wonderful Easter and we'll look forward to seeing you all again on the 19th April.

Kind regards,

Sam Payton

Principal – Excel Performing Arts

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www.excelperformingarts.co.uk