



PALUCCA - ALUMNI

AUGUST | SEPTEMBER

Letter from the Editor



Dear Alumni,

On July 17, 2020, with the festive send-off of our young talents from the Young Talents Programme (N4), we officially ended the summer semester and the school year. Prior to this, we had the pleasure of congratulating this-year's BA Dance (BAT3) graduates for the completion of their studies and for their start in careers as professional dancers. In addition, our Orientation Classes (O1 and O2) have successfully mastered a challenging school year. We would like to express our respect and gratitude to the prospective graduates of our MA Dance Teacher Programme and MA Choreography Programme, some of whom are still in the final-phases of their studies, for their perseverance and creativity during these times.

In the past weeks, we have taken growing interest in how our Alumni have experienced these challenging times. In addition to good news such as how some of you have taken on new professional challenges, we have also followed the difficulties some of our freelance Alumni have experienced. We admire your strength and inspiration in utilizing the current easing of measures to reunite society through art and cultural activities.

In this issue, we once again wish to offer our Alumni a platform in which they can share their news and introduce themselves. I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks to all of the authors who have contributed to this edition.

And I wish all of you great enjoyment reading this newsletter and a relaxing summer.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shalene Schmidt".

Shalene Schmidt

Student Marketing & Alumni-Coordinator

FROM THE UNIVERSITY

Current News

World Ballet School Day (WBSD)

The Palucca University of Dance Dresden is among the twelve training centres from three continents who are taking part as founding members in World Ballet School Day. Furthermore, alumna Olivia Mitchel (BA Dance) is a founding member of the WBSD Student Committee. An exclusive WBSD film clip is available until August 7, 2020 (click PLAY below).

WBSD connects the next generation of young professional dance artists with young people from all over the world. Created by students for students, this event provides a platform for young artists in training to share a message of solidarity through the language of dance and ballet. Further information can be found at www.worldballetschoolday.com.



WORLD
BALLET
SCHOOL
DAY



© WBSD

Release: Dance Film Matinée 2020

The Palucca University of Dance Dresden's dance film "DISTANZ: connected – isolation", produced by Frédéric Coupet, presenting 28 dance pieces, 13 world premieres and new "Corona" adaptations of existing choreographies is now available online. Roughly 140 university pupils and students from the fifth year up to this year's graduates of our BA Dance Programme and also our apprentices participated in the film. The dance film is available online until August 15, 2020.



PALUCCA HOCHSCHULE FÜR TANZ DRESDEN

DISTANZ

C o n n e c t e d I s o l a t i o n

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FROM THE UNIVERSITY

Current News

New Trailer for Young Talents Programme

"Made by students for students! There is no better way to get a feeling of what it means to study at the Palucca University of Dance Dresden than to hear it from the current students themselves (...)," Prof. Jason Beechey said. One can still register for the next aptitude test which is scheduled for September 19, 2020 (5th to 10th year). A lateral entry for the 2020/21 school year is also possible. Further information about the Young Talents Programme can be found at www.palucca.eu/en/degree_programmes/young_talents_programme/topic.html (click PLAY below).



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Newsletter Survey



ALUMNI PORTRAIT

Xanthe Geeves



© Gregor Thieler

I moved from Australia to study at Palucca University of Dance as a seventeen year old. Palucca offered a program where I could indulge my passion for both classical ballet and contemporary dance, and be encouraged and nurtured as an artist. At Palucca, I had mentors who were to play a huge part in shaping my career as a dancer and choreographer - Prof. Tappendorf, Herr Diekamp and Raymond Hilbert. As a student, I was offered amazing opportunities to perform with the Semperoper Ballet, Hannover Ballet and at the Prix de Lausanne. Upon graduating in 2000, I embarked upon a fourteen year performance career beginning with the **English National Ballet**, and ending as a Principal dancer in Hannover and Wiesbaden, with Stephan Thoss. This was followed by a period as a choreographer and dancer together with Gregor Thieler (Palucca Alumnus 2000) in the USA and Berlin (Impetus Dance Arts).

In 2013, we became directors of Ballet Academy Northside in Sydney, Australia and took on the role as educators and choreographers. In 2017, we established **Sydney College of Dance** and Sydney Ballet Theatre company to provide a platform for Pre-professional dancers. We feel it's important to give our students perspective of the diverse opportunities of an international dance career as performing artists, and experience the collaboration process of working with international choreographers.

ALUMNI PORTRAIT

Xanthe Geeves

As a choreographer I create works for the Schools Spectacular with the Featured Ballet Ensemble; tutor and choreograph with the Arts Unit of Education NSW and create career development programs for teachers of dance education in NSW schools. Schools Spectacular is a televised production with over 5000 students performed for a live audience of over 20000 spectators. In 2020, I was delighted to return to the **Prix de Lausanne**, this time **as a mentor** for my student.

After a decade of working as a choreographer with six full-length original productions, I was awarded **The Australian Ballet's Emerging Female Classical Choreographer 2020**. This commission

to create a work for The Australian Ballet will be an amazing opportunity to collaborate with world class dancers and Orchestra Victoria. Through my education and career as a performing artist and choreographer, I recognise that it is vitally important



© Erik Sawaya

to nurture and develop a strong and confident artistic voice and to recognise that authenticity and intention are integral to forming a strong connection with an audience.

(Translation of the Alumni Portrait: Xanthe Geeves/Gregor Thieler).

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PILATES

with Sandra Käfer

The Pilates abdominal series, as a preventive measure against strain in the lower-back region.

Today, I would like to focus on the lumbosacral junction. This is the joint between the fifth lumbar vertebrae and the sacrum. When a dancer bends forward, this is the spot where the torsional moment is at its greatest and a great deal of strength must be exerted to work against a rounded back. What happens, though, if the weight is too high and the strain makes one round the back? The first thing that happens is that the facet joint which we need for deflecting shear forces opens. The intervertebral discs and ligaments around this joint must absorb this strong pull. This area of the spine is more susceptible for injuries because the pressure is the highest here when moving with applied force on the spine.



What can we do?

Let's think about this: What do we have to do to counteract pressure and pull on one side of a joint? Counter-pressure and counter-pull. Which muscles are the antagonistic muscles for this lumbar area? The muscles in the front, the abdominal muscles. The firmer the abdominal muscles are, the better the spine is supported. Naturally, dancers have very good abdominal muscles, but the ratio of the muscular strength between front and back must be correct. In dancers, the lower back muscles are strong and extremely well developed and these pull hard on the spinal joints. That is the reason for a dancer's beautiful erect posture. This, however, exerts a high amount of stress on this area and therefore it is easily susceptible to possible excessive strain on the lower back. A balance of muscle-strength can be easily established with the well-known Pilates Abdominal Series of Five which is especially suitable as a preventive measure and which should be taught to young dancers as early as possible.

WWW.FIRSTPILATES.AT

WWW.THEPILATESSTANDARD.EU



PILATES

with Sandra Käfer

Single Leg Stretch



Lift your head off the mat to the tips of your shoulder blades and with both hands pull one knee tightly to your chest. Extend the other leg straight out away from you, push your sacrum downwards. Switch sides in rhythm. 6-12 repetitions for each side.

Double Leg Stretch



Raise both legs to your chest, at the same time lower the sacrum into the floor, lift your head leaving the tips of the shoulder blades on the floor. Now at the same time, stretch the arms and the legs above you (for advanced level at a 45° angle), the arms move to your shins in a circle, at the same time bend your knees to your chest. INHALE when stretching and EXHALE when flexing. 6-10 repetitions.

Scissors (Single Straight Leg Stretch)



PILATES

with Sandra Käfer

Lift your head and extend both legs above you. Open them like a scissor, keeping the sacrum down on the floor and leaving the tips of the shoulder blades on the mat. With your hands, pull one leg gently to your chest two times and extend the other leg away from you, changing sides in rhythm. 6-12 repetitions for each side.

Lower Lift (Double Straight Leg Stretch)



Place your folded hands on the back of your head, lift your head and extend your legs above you. Lower your legs to a 45° angle over three counts and return to the 90° position over one count. 6-10 repetitions.

Criss Cross



Place your folded hands on the back of your head, lift your head and pull knees to your chest. Twist your upper-body for a count of three to one side and extend the diagonal leg in a 45° angle, come back to the middle and change sides.

I have enjoyed writing these articles for the Palucca University of Dance Dresden very much. Thank you with all my heart for this opportunity. Yours, Sandra Käfer

ALUMNI NEWS IN BRIEF

Anthony Bachelier (2015 | BA Dance Programme)

Semperoper Ballet Dresden



Dear Palucca University of Dance Dresden Alumni, it is with great honour that I announce my promotion to Coryphée at the Semperoper Ballet. After five seasons it is surprising and also exciting to continue on my journey as a dancer. What did I learn during my time as a member of the corps de ballet? I learned to be patient and to respect rules and in doing so to invest my energy in good results. For me, the key to success is staying calm! I wish you all pa-

tience, inspiration, strength, and the courage needed to believe in your dreams. Thank you everyone, Anthony Bachelier, Coryphée of the Semperoper Ballet.

Caroline Beach (2018 | MA Choreography Programme)

Participant in the TANZPAKT (Dance Pact) Dresden Co-productions

The TANZPAKT Dresden Co-production 2020 is a fantastic opportunity for me to realise my work on another level. With TANZPAKT Co-production, I will be in a position to put together a team of interdisciplinary artists. Together, we want to create a show that includes not only dance and music but also the visual and media arts. I am looking forward to finding new means of creativity and ultimately to being able to show our audience something that feels vibrant and challenging.

Antonio Russo (2019 | BA Dance Programme)

Semperoper Ballet Dresden - Apprentice Programme



„Looking back on this season, I have to say that I learned a great deal on many different levels. Of course, working with the Semperoper Ballett has been an incredible experience, but there were also setbacks due to Covid-19. Unable to dance during quarantine, everyone had to adapt quickly to a new way of life and find ways to work efficiently soundly working from home. Facing this challenging time made me realize how important it is to be on stage with an open and generous heart;

always eager to give everything we have to the audience. I am extremely excited to start a new chapter of my life in Copenhagen, as the newest member of the Tivoli Ballet Theatre!”

Student Marketing & Alumni-Coordinator

Shalene Schmidt

Palucca University of Dance Dresden
Basteiplatz 4 | 01069 Dresden
Tel.: +49 (0)351 25906-45
www.palucca.eu/en/alumni

Would you like to advertise your project in the Alumni-Newsletter free of charge? If so, then please contact us at alumni@palucca.eu.

The next Alumni Newsletter will be published in October 2020.

Palucca University of Dance Dresden
Rector: Prof. Jason Beechey

Editor & Layout: Shalene Schmidt

Images (if not indicated otherwise): Palucca University of Dance Dresden, Shalene Schmidt, www.unsplash.com

Translation into English (if not indicated otherwise):
Helen Centner (Dipl. authorized translator and English Trainer (BDÜ, ELTAF, BESIG))

Edition: August/September 2020



Diese Maßnahme wird mitfinanziert mit Steuermitteln auf Grundlage des vom Sächsischen Landtag beschlossenen Haushaltes.



gefördert vom
DAAD aus Mitteln des
Auswärtigen Amtes (AA)



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