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## About FCD

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**Foundation for Community Dance (FCD) works to support the development of community dance in the UK and internationally. Our vision is for a world where dance is part of everyone's life, our mission to make engagement with dance important to individuals, communities and society.**

### What we do

We support a network of over 1,700 individuals and organisations – some 4,600 like-minded professionals and supporters – including dance artists, organisations and teachers; colleges and universities; funding and policy organisations and local government. We do this through:

- **Providing information and support** including a magazine, newsletters, an information-packed website, insurance scheme and Criminal Records Bureau disclosures.
- **Representing the sector and advocating on its behalf** across national and local government, arts policy makers and funders, and other sectors of the arts.
- **Leading strategic development programmes** that include: training events, conferences, publishing, networking opportunities and campaigns. Currently our focus is on: dance, health and well-being; London 2012; inter-cultural dialogue; disability; international profile and workforce development.

### Benefits of membership

We offer a range of Membership schemes, open to all individuals and organisations involved in community and participatory dance at a professional level. Membership of the Foundation for Community Dance offers some brilliant benefits, which are all about supporting you in your work:

- Three issues of Animated magazine and access to an extensive on-line library
- An information-packed website and e-newsletters
- Access to public liability insurance and a CRB disclosure service
- Reduced rates for FCD events and professional development programmes
- A listing in our on-line members directory

It's about more than what you get, it's about what you're part of. FCD's leadership of the community dance network provides a platform for exchange, critical debate and peer learning, exposure to diverse dance practices, making new contacts, expanding professional horizons, your profile and professional identity. It is an invaluable resource for anyone working in community dance, and creating opportunities for people to participate in dance.

Annual subscription fees range from £17.50 – £160.

## Editor's critical faculties

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Globe-trotting guest editor **Donald Hutera** scans this female-dominated issue of Animated before delving into Asia

Variety attracts me in almost any form, and that includes travel. Both personally and professionally I've been all over the place this autumn – Sardinia (on holiday), Korea and China (by invitation as a journalist) and Cuba (on assignment). I tend to work hard on these business trips, but I'm also acutely aware of what a privileged existence I lead to have such opportunities.

There's a similarly wide-ranging spirit afoot in community dance, something that I trust this issue of Animated might well reflect. We've opted to hang it all on the thematic peg of Personal Viewpoints. To that end we've got Jo Verrent examining Caroline Bowditch's role as Dance Artist for Change at Scottish Dance Theatre, but doing so within the context of artistic director Janet Smith's expanded vision of how she and the company can broaden the art form's possibilities. Rachel Elliott, in her article on English folk dance, references the historical achievements of a couple of key players in that field without neglecting what's happening today. Then there's Niki Pollard asking community dance practitioners of all stripes if they're able to acknowledge and articulate what they glean from each other, and Beth Cassani detailing a unique dance work made with her two sons (who are also this issue's cover boys).

In mid-October I attended a public discussion organised by Dance Umbrella and Dance UK and entitled Where Are the Women? Its purpose was to question the dearth of opportunities for and - compared to their male counterparts - lack of profile of the UK's many female dance-makers. Are there differences in the way that men and women conceptualise their work and utilise the performing space? Could be. Other reasons suggested for the gender disparity included the ticking of biological clocks and, following on from that, the demands of juggling both a career and parenting.

It was all chewy food for thought, but I've got an idea or two – call it a personal viewpoint, if you wish – about just where the women are. From my perspective a lot of them are writing for Animated. It was by accident rather than design that, with one exception, women are responsible every article in this issue. Before anyone damns the magazine as community dance's answer to chick-lit, allow me to point out that Kate Gant and Mark Webster are jointly credited as the authors of a well-considered piece about the value and necessity of arts workers documenting what they do. But, at the risk of offending Mr. Webster, he's this issue's token male. Along with yours truly, of course.

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So, what other hot topics are women investigating in these pages? Subject matter runs a gamut from hip hop (via SunSun's informed take on the continued rise of the bgirl) and government policy (thanks to the Rt Hon Margaret Hodge's contribution on Find Your Talent) to flamenco in the Seychelles (blissful, according to Jackie Wilford) and tango with VIPs (visually impaired people, that is, as elegantly guided by Adriana Pegorer). We've also got Carolyn Lappin's slant on Scotland 2012 and 2014, Jess Allen's savvy resistance to pigeonholing as a disabled dance artist, Roni Cheesman recounting the rewards of her Trailblazing research and Lisa Dowler's sensitive use of touch in a hospital setting.

I'm going to switch gears here and expand on my aforementioned experiences as a globe-trotting hack. Some of you might imagine all members of the fourth estate as nothing but a pack of hard-boiled bloodhounds who'll stop at nothing to track down a story. I beg to differ. Instead of toughening up, age is turning me into an ol' softie. Increasingly I find myself crying at performances. Can I 'blame' the arts for this? Maybe it's male menopause. Anyway, it happened at the Korea Cultural House in Seoul as I watched a wonderfully strong-spirited young woman singing, dancing and playing the drum as part of an evening of traditional solos. Some older audience members were responding with infectious joy to her gutsy stylings. Stopping near the lip of the stage, her sudden stillness was so charged with beauty and suspense that it brought tears to my eyes. It wasn't just her performance that moved me, but the sheer delight with which the public received it.

In Asia I soaked up other emotional and communal experiences. One was observing a nocturnal shamanistic ritual on a rocky sliver of a beach on the southern coast of Korea. Afterwards we moved indoors for more revelry, both formal and informal and featuring several artists classed as living embodiments of Intangible Cultural Heritage. (One was a man who, earlier that same day, I'd witnessed dancing in a field that he'd been busy watering just before we arrived.)

China, too, afforded more memorable moments connected to dance. Local residents could be spotted day or night in Zizhuyuan (or Purple Bamboo) Park, in the northwest of the Beijing, unself-consciously practicing t'ai chi and other forms of movement. I was tickled, too, by a post-midnight visit to a 24-hour foot massage parlour. Nothing naughty occurred. Instead three perfectly chaste but powerful young women executed in relaxed unison an

incredibly soothing, yet also highly choreographed, hands-on routine entirely for the benefit of the bodies (and souls) of my two colleagues and me.

All of this fed into my perceptions of Danscross. It took three years of negotiations to set up this cultural exchange between the venerable Beijing Dance Academy and ResCen, a multi-disciplinary and process-oriented research department at Middlesex University. Over a six-month period the two organisations joined forces to host the creation of eight new dance works whose collective theme was Dance in a Shaking World. The choreographic brief was relatively simple. Each artist – four from China, three from the UK (Shobana Jeyasingh, Kerry Nicholls and Jonathan Lunn) and one from Hong Kong via Australia – was invited to spend eleven days in Beijing fashioning a dance that would last no more than ten minutes and utilise up to six members of the BDA Dance Company.

The dances of the Chinese choreographers were, unsurprisingly, quite distinct from their foreign counterparts. Zhao Ming's Trust or Not took swine flu as the topical inspiration for a fairly obvious study of group dynamics with, in its favour, a hopeful ending. Zhang Yunfeng's starting point for The brightest light in the darkest night was Liu Yan, a BDA dancer injured during the final preparations for the 2008 Olympics and now a wheelchair-user. Set on two levels, this heart-on-its-sleeve work was her first time onstage since the accident. An exquisite, long-armed presence in a red ballgown, she occupied a high platform stage right. Until the closing tableau, three male co-stars danced with expansive sensitivity below her.

With luck, UK audiences might be able to view some of the fruits of Danscross in later 2010. For my part, having had a small but unforgettable taste of some of the marvels and contradictions of Asian culture first-hand, I'm now wondering what the scene is like for East Asian dance artists based in the UK. You could be reading about that very subject in a future issue of Animated.

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This issue of Animated was guest edited by Donald Hutera and produced by: Ken Bartlett, Creative Director; Rosie Frances, Programme Coordinator; Chris Stenton, Development Director.