

## About FCD

**Foundation for Community Dance (FCD) is the professional organisation for anyone involved in creating opportunities for people to experience and participate in dance.**

We believe that dance can transform the lives of individuals and communities. Our vision is for a world where dance is a part of everyone's life, our mission to make engagement in dance important to individuals, communities and society.

FCD's leadership of the community dance network provides a platform for exchange, critical debate and peer learning, exposure to diverse dance practices, new contacts and expands your professional horizons and profile.

Our development programmes focus on issues central to the community dance sector including professional development, health and wellbeing, disability and London 2012. **FCD is an invaluable resource for anyone involved in community and participatory dance.**

We support over 1,800 members across the UK and internationally – a network of like-minded professionals and supporters – including dance artists, organisations and teachers; colleges and universities; funding and policy organisations and local government.

We have four Membership Schemes that offer some **brilliant benefits:**

- **Professional Membership**

(Individuals, £25; Organisations, £75 - £150 annually)

- **Associate Membership**

(Individuals, £25; Organisations, £75 - £150 annually)

- **Educational Membership**

(Students, £17.50; HE/FE Institutions, £125; Library Subscriptions and Schools, £45 annually)

- **International Membership** (Students, £15; Individuals, £20; Organisations, £45; HE/FE Institutions, £125 annually)

**To find out more about becoming a member call us on +44 (0)116 253 3453 or visit [www.communitydance.org.uk/join](http://www.communitydance.org.uk/join)**

## Editor's critical faculties

Guest editor and self-styled honorary Welshman **Donald Huttera** guides you through this issue of *Animated*

**This is my third crack at being guest editor of *Animated*, and the experience has once again been a daunting pleasure.** Why daunting? Because there are so many stories to tell from within the ever-spinning world of community dance, and a dizzying number of angles to take on it. I can't think of another area of the industry as diverse in its outlook and as ripe with possibilities as this one is. It's this multiplicity of interests and viewpoints that the magazine's production team and I have tried to highlight in the choices we've made about what to include in the current issue.

We may not have quite tapped into the range of particularities encompassed in Shakespeare's 'seven ages of man' speech from *As You Like It*, but at the very least we've made room for what independent dance artist Wendy Houstoun refers to as the 'small, middle and big people' in her writing on *Dancing in Time*. The latter, as you'll discover in these pages, was the title of the intergenerational performance that Wendy cooked up at the behest of Yorkshire Dance this past summer. She has some lovely, fresh and honest observations to make about the rewards of working with a large, hard-working gang of non-professional dancers of all ages. One of the latter was the admittedly out-of-shape, middle-aged journalist Patrick Kelly. His words, which you'll also find here, are brimming with a fine mix of self-deprecating humour and unalloyed joy. The man plainly likes to take risks, and dance was just the vehicle to drive him to do so.

Passionate, personal and infused with enthusiasm and sensitivity – these rank high on the list of qualities I most like to come across in relation to writing about community dance. Which is not to imply that everything is always coming up roses in this field of human artistic expression. How realistic would that be anyway? It's absolutely okay to gripe or grind an axe in these pages, provided it's done with an enquiring intelligence and a willingness to open up your ideas for debate. Take a look at what the Scottish choreographer Janice Parker has to say in her long but beautifully considered article on dance and disability. (It's an adaptation of a paper she delivered at Moving On, a one-day conference jointly organised by Glasgow's Dance House and Indepen-dance last March.) This is a prime example of writing that truly wants to engage with its audience and, if we're receptive enough, compel us to think outside the box. In a similar spirit you might dip into Pauline Gladstone's detailed report on a recent Dance United event centred on the needs of dance professionals who work with



**Above:** Donald Huttera Photo: Rob Greig/Timeout

challenging groups, or mull over IRIE! dance theatre's direct appeal for responses to its questions about issues of training in African Peoples Dance.

I'm suddenly reminded of an interview I did with Mark Morris during which he claimed he'd rather that he and his work were intelligently dumped upon than lavishly, but fatuously, praised. With that in mind, on behalf of the Foundation for Community Dance I'd like to make a proposal: glide through or, better yet, dive deep into this issue of the magazine and then, when you're ready, drop us a line or two (or more) and tell us what you think or feel about the content. If the replies are in sufficient numbers we could start up a letters page. Take cover, as I'm about to let my imagination run away with me here. Who's to say that the Foundation's powers-that-be couldn't green light the notion of prizes for the best pieces of correspondence? Maybe something like 'See your words in print and win a starring role in the next production masterminded by Robin Dingemans!'

That's not a bad deal, actually, and not just because Robin is such a gifted artist. Turn to the professional development section of this issue and you'll get the inside track on his novel approach to devising a community dance piece. Robin used himself as a sieve, soliciting ideas and instructions from more than two dozen mainly non-dance related individuals with each of whom he spent a day in the studio. After sifting through the resultant material, he artfully assembled it into what was to all intents and purposes a solo in which he was not incidentally accompanied by a live musician. The set-up was ideal for shy people, or anyone wary of audience participation if only because all the participation was done in private, one-to-one sessions.

There are other goodies here, like Fiona Ross' story of how a single television programme turned an over-60s dance group into an overnight sensation. It couldn't have happened to a nicer bunch than Sadler's Wells' Company of Elders. Anjali is another of my favourite UK companies. I've been a firm fan ever since I first saw this Banbury-based ensemble in 2001 at the Purcell Room on London's South Bank, where I believe it was the first learning disabled company in the venue's history to charge the public to see its work. My positive feelings were reinforced when I later attended a sharing of work by several learning disabled groups at The Place. Anjali was the only one whose members spoke entirely for themselves. Such chutzpah carries over into the company's performances but also, as you will read, into dancer Mark Barber's new appointment

as its Associate Director (Education). Mark, I salute you.

I've touched upon some, but not all, of the focal points of this issue. It's not just the active and young-at-heart Elders who get a look in, but also several classrooms full of German teen-agers. Under the guidance of Jo Parkes and the creative teams brought together by her company MobileDance, loads of young people shot short dance films set in the great, complex city of Berlin. Children and families, meanwhile, were the principal targets for Doran George at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. His description of the spontaneous, outdoor workshops he led there is packed with playful discoveries.

The magazine will continue its coverage of events and initiatives in dance during the run-up to the Cultural Olympiad. To that end we invited Gwyn L Williams, Creative Programmer for London 2012 in Wales, to point out all that's happening in the land of the red dragon. As to be expected, it's a good deal more than you can shake a leek at. Sorry, but entirely unlike Gwyn I just couldn't resist a clichéd cultural reference or two.

So there you have it, another jam-packed issue that ideally finds a healthy balance between personal stories, public policy and professional strategy. I trust that we've supplied you, dear reader, with plenty of stimulation and, perhaps, at least a bit of provocation. Or maybe that'll have to wait till next time. I've enjoyed myself enough working on this edition of Animated to have another bash at the editing game. As of yet I've got no clear idea what the winter 2010 issue will contain, but I vow that I will try to raise the standard of my attempts at editorial witticism. About all I can say in apology is that in the early 1990s I lived and worked in north Wales for just under a year, and I grew to love slate and sheep. Diolch yn fawr! (That's Welsh for thank you.)

Donald Huttera writes regularly for The Times, Dance Europe, Animated and many other publications.

**contact** donaldhutera@yahoo.com

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

If you have an idea about a contribution to Animated contact Ken Bartlett on ken@communitydance.org.uk with more information.