

**Rural Retreat 2008:
*Future Leaders and Artistic Directors***

Thursday 10 to Monday 14 January 2008

Brocket Hall, Welwyn
Hertfordshire, England

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Introduction

Rural Retreat 2008: *Future Leaders and Artistic Directors* was the fourth Rural Retreat produced and hosted by DanceEast. The first two, in 2003 and 2005, brought together the artistic directors of international ballet companies. The third brought together directors of both dance companies and schools and was held in partnership with the Prix de Lausanne in Vevey, Switzerland in 2006. *Future Leaders and Artistic Directors* continued the future-facing focus and took a broader theme by bringing together dance professionals who had identified their aspiration to become artistic directors, and to be prepared for when the opportunity to lead arose.

The 27 participants came from 12 countries including China, Australia, France, the USA, Canada, Finland, the Czech Republic, Poland, Spain and the UK. At the reception following the Retreat they made the following statement:

“Dance is the language of our times. We, as a group of international artists, invite you to recognise with us the enormous contribution that dance has to make and the importance of international exchange in securing its future.”

We are excited about pioneering the renewal and transformation of leadership in dance and are dedicated to the pursuit of excellence and creativity of the art form. It is in safe hands.”

The four days were facilitated by the same team as the last three Rural Retreats, namely, **Sue Hoyle**, Deputy Director of the Clore Leadership Programme and **Professor Christopher Bannerman**, Head of Rescen at Middlesex University. The guest speakers were **Frank Andersen**, Artistic Director, Royal Danish Ballet, **Reid Anderson**, Artistic Director, Stuttgart Ballet, Germany, **Alistair Spalding**, Chief Executive and Artistic Director, Sadler’s Wells, **Graham Taylor OBE**, ex-England Football Manager and Radio 5 Live Football, and **Zoë van Zwanenberg**, Chief Executive, Scottish Leadership Foundation.

“The art form of dance is not lost and is not adrift. There is vision, there are people to take it forward, and there are minds to challenge it, make it relevant to society and to the audiences of this new century. During these four days I had the privilege to share a common passion and see into the future and rejoice in what is coming and the artists that are going to take us there.”

Tamara Rojo, Principal Dancer, The Royal Ballet

“If this Rural Retreat is anything to go by, the future of dance is in good hands. These last few days have been very inspiring. A new generation of individuals has emerged who are passionate, curious and ready to grasp challenges. They are determined to question and challenge old models not just for themselves, but for the people they lead. The next generation is not only inwardly resourceful but outward-facing with a focus on the future.”

The dance community globally must find a way to ensure that such gatherings are not one-offs. Continuing professional development is integral to the directorial plans of all dance organisations. We cannot expect our dance organisations around the world to find their right leaders without support systems at all levels in an artist’s career.”

Assis Carreiro, Director, DanceEast

The fourth Rural Retreat was not only an opportunity for debate. DanceEast is already offering practical opportunities and has secured funding from the Cultural Leadership Programme for up to six placements with leading international dance companies for aspiring leaders to shadow artistic directors and work in all aspects of a dance organisation.

David McAllister at The Australian Ballet, Bruce Sansom at Central School of Ballet, Anders Hellström at Nederlands Dance Theatre, David Nixon at Northern Ballet Theatre, Monica Mason at The Royal Ballet, Janet Smith at Scottish Dance Theatre, Helgi Tomasson at San Francisco Ballet (for 2009), Reid Anderson at Stuttgart Ballet and Tero Saarinen at Tero Saarinen Company in Finland have all agreed to host a placement. Funding is being provided by DanceEast, various trusts and funding bodies, with The Cultural Leadership Programme providing £33,000 to fund three of the placements.

The fourth Rural Retreat was supported by Arts Council England East, The Jerwood Foundation, the Rudolf Nureyev Foundation UK, Harlequin Floors, East of England Development Agency, Freed of London, the Czech Centre, the Canada Council / Conseil des arts du Canada, The Royal Netherlands Embassy, the Australian Arts Council and the Polish Cultural Institute.

Attendees

Participants

Adrian Burnett (Australia)
Marc Brew (UK/Australia)
Farooq Chaudhry (UK/Pakistan)
Tamas Detrich (Germany/USA)
Sylvie Dhuyetter (France)
Thomas Edur (UK/Estonia)
Jeff Edwards (USA)
André Gingras (The Netherlands)
Daniel Gwartzman (USA)
Rex Harrington (Canada)
Branislav Henselmann (USA/Germany)
Sampo Kivelä (Finland)
Václav Kuneš (Czech Republic)
Cathy Marston (UK/Switzerland)

Ernst Meisner (UK/Holland)
Otto Neubert (USA/Germany)
Tilman O'Donnell (Germany/USA)
Tamara Rojo (UK/Spain)
Ana Luján Sánchez (UK/Spain)
Christopher Stowell (USA)
Kenneth Tharp (UK)
Michael Trent (Canada)
Will Tuckett (UK)
Karol Urbański's (Poland)
Sharon Watson (UK)
Natalie Weir (Australia)
Feng Ying (China)

Facilitators

Sue Hoyle, Deputy Director, Clore Leadership Programme
Christopher Bannerman, Head of ResCen, Middlesex University

Guest Speakers

Frank Andersen, Artistic Director, Royal Danish Ballet
Reid Anderson, Artistic Director, Stuttgart Ballet
Alistair Spalding, Artistic Director and Chief Executive, Sadler's Wells Theatre, London
Graham Taylor OBE, Former England Football Manager
Zoë van Zwanenberg, Chief Executive, Scottish Leadership Foundation

For Dance East

Assis Carreiro, Director
Susannah Burke, Special Projects Officer

Rural Retreat 2008: *Future Leaders and Artistic Directors*

Fact Sheet

Dates:	Thu 10 th to Mon 14 th January 2008
Venue:	Brocket Hall, Welwyn, Hertfordshire, AL8 7XG, England
Website:	www.brocket-hall.co.uk
Arrival time:	From 5pm Thursday 10 th Jan 2008 (NB we do not have access to Brocket Hall before this time)
Departure time:	By 10am Monday 14 th Jan 2008
Travel:	22 miles from central London A1 (M) 1½ miles M1 6 miles M25 7 miles Main line express from King's Cross to Welwyn Garden City 2 miles London Underground (into London King's Cross) Luton Airport 7 miles Heathrow Airport 29 miles Stansted Airport 30 miles Gatwick Airport 74 miles
Facilitators:	Prof Christopher Bannerman , Head of the Centre for Research into Creation in the Performing Arts, Middlesex University Sue Hoyle , Deputy Director of the Clore Leadership Programme in London
Guest Speakers:	Frank Andersen , Artistic Director, Royal Danish Ballet Reid Anderson , Artistic Director, Stuttgart Ballet Alistair Spalding , Artistic Director and Chief Executive, Sadler's Wells Theatre, London Graham Taylor OBE , Former England Football Manager Zoë van Zwaneberg , Chief Executive, Scottish Leadership Foundation
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Local Taxis:	AAA Cars: 01707 888777

Objectives

- To provide a meeting place for future leaders/artistic directors
- To explore personal and global leadership issues
- To seek ways forward for the art form and new models of working
- To support individuals with career paths to becoming leaders/artistic directors

Features

The weekend will include:

- Social time, time to relax, chat and get to know each other
- Good food and an elegant setting in vast parkland
- Plenty of breaks between sessions
- Pleasant, comfortable surroundings
- Opportunities to listen and be heard, to be passionate, questioning, exploratory, uncertain, visionary
- Whole group and small group facilitated discussions
- Contributions from a range of guest speakers
- Facilitation by Christopher Bannerman and Sue Hoyle
- Organisational support by DanceEast: Assis Carreiro and Susannah Burke

What to bring

Warm, comfortable clothes

Brocket Hall is very elegant, but we have it all to ourselves and there is no need to be formal! Dress code for dinner on Thursday, Friday and Sunday is informal. You may wish to dress up for the dinner in the Ballroom on Saturday night.

And what *not* to bring

Mobile phone (or, kept in your room for personal telephone calls)

Laptop

Blackberry

Work: casting, rehearsal or tour schedules etc.

Schedule

Time		Location
Thursday 10 January		
5.00pm	Check in at Brocket Hall and Melbourne Lodge	Brocket Hall
6.30pm	Welcome drinks and introductions	Morning Room
7.30pm	Overview of the Retreat and provocation from Sue Hoyle and Chris Bannerman	Morning Room
7.45pm	Buffet Supper	Dining Room
Friday 11 January		
8.00am on	Breakfast	Dining Room
9.30am-12.30pm	Introductions and split into small discussion groups	Board Room
11.00am	Tea/Coffee break	Morning Room
11.15am	Continue in groups	Board Room
12.30pm	Lunch	Dining Room
2.00pm	Feedback from morning sessions	Board Room
3.30pm	Tea/Coffee Break	Morning Room
3.50pm	Cathy Marston: <i>Reality Check: 6 Months into the Job</i> The shock of being the leader Q&A	Board Room
5:30pm	Break	
6.30pm	Pre-dinner Drinks	Morning Room
7.00pm	Zoë van Zwanenberg: <i>The Challenges of Leadership</i> The business of dance; looking outwards and what it means to be a leader	Morning Room
7.30pm	Dinner	Ball Room
	Post- dinner sofa discussion with Zoë	Morning Room

Schedule

Time		Location
Saturday 12 January		
8.00 on	Breakfast	Dining Room
9.30am-12.30pm	Prepare for afternoon panel discussion by looking at questions of managing people, managing people's expectations; managing art/audiences	Board Room
11.00am	Tea/Coffee Break	Morning Room
12.30pm	Buffet Lunch	Dining Room
2.00pm 2-2.05pm 2.10 – 2.20pm 2.25-2.40pm 2.40-3.00pm 3.00pm – 3.30pm	<p>Discussion chaired by Zoë van Zwanenberg <i>Making Choices/Making Decisions</i></p> <p>Zoë van Zwanenberg - Chair <i>Introduction</i></p> <p>Frank Andersen: <i>Developing the 'Team'</i></p> <p>Reid Anderson: <i>Accountability and Artistic Vision</i> How to balance the books and ensure artistic integrity whilst meeting the needs of stakeholders – Europe v North America.</p> <p>Alistair Spalding: <i>Making Programming Decisions</i> Making it work for both the venue and the company; the role of Artistic Director as Producer and 'producing' work; how to ensure you are developing a creative organisation and maintaining this creativity, particularly within institutions.</p> <p>Q&A</p>	Board Room
3.30pm	Tea/Coffee Break	Morning Room
3.50pm	Break out sessions	Syndicate Rooms
5.00pm	Summing up	Board Room
5.30pm	Break and photo call joined by Graham Taylor	Brocket Hall
7.30pm	Drinks	Morning Room
8.00pm	Dinner	Ball Room

Schedule

Sunday 13 January		
8.30-10.30am	Late breakfast with guest speakers	Dining Room
11am	Graham Taylor: <i>Managing People to Achieve Success – Can dance pick up some tips from the premiere league?</i> Q &A	Board Room
1pm	Lunch	Dining Room
2.30pm	<i>Where Do We Go From Here? Pathways for the Future</i>	
5.30pm	Break	
7pm	Coach to The Plume of Feathers Pub, Tewin	Plume of Feathers
7.30pm	Supper	
11.30pm	Return to Brocket Hall for post supper self-led groups	Morning Room
Monday 14 January		
8am on	Breakfast	Dining Room
9.00am	Departure by coach to the House of Commons, London	
12.15-2.15pm	Reception at the House of Commons, Terrace Pavilion	

The Retreat

Welcome address

Assis Carreiro, Director of DanceEast

Eight years ago, when we conceived these Retreats, I honestly had no idea whether anyone would want to come along, and now here we are on Retreat number four. It has been a fascinating journey, from the first meeting of existing dance leaders to today and the start of the first Retreat for aspiring future leaders.

Firstly, a big thanks to all of you for travelling here from the four corners of the globe. We are delighted to have such a broad mix of individuals. From over 75 applicants, you are the lucky 27 that were selected and you represent 16 countries and goodness knows how many nationalities, a real statement of the internationalism of our profession, truly without borders.

A very warm welcome to Brocket Hall and rural Hertfordshire - yes, that is why they are called Rural Retreats, not exactly a log cabin, but definitely rural and a retreat. Brocket Hall is virtually ours for the next four days and operates more like a country house than a hotel. It dates back to the 13th century and the current hall was built in 1760. Those of you who want to learn about the romance, scandal and intrigue that has taken place within these walls can read through the leaflets in the front hall and yes, these are authentic Reynolds and Murillos on the walls. Meals have been pre-selected, there are no menus and if you have any special dietary requirements please see Susannah. There are 543 acres of wonderful grounds around the Hall to explore and keen golfers can take advantage of the golf course.

Preparing for this Retreat has been a very different experience from the previous ones, and most stimulating, particularly in bringing you together. You are truly a diverse group, with a range of backgrounds and experiences in dance and all with a passion to lead the art form forward in the 21st century. It is also different because you have decided that you aspire to being leaders. You don't need to prove yourselves this weekend; it isn't a job interview, just an in-depth opportunity to find out if the big job is what you really want. Some of you may leave on Monday convinced this is just not for you and others may be even more enthusiastic about taking the plunge!

This weekend is about artistic leadership. It is about what it takes to make a vision a reality, how to take people with you on a journey that preserves all that is great and worth keeping, and ensures that we remain fresh and relevant as an art form to ourselves and our many stakeholders - dancers, artistic and administrative staff, politicians, audiences and the wider world in which we live.

For many of you this is an opportunity to meet up with old friends and more importantly to make new ones and hear a range of perspectives on dance, its leadership and new and existing organisational models. I hope it will be a wonderful and inspiring adventure, which asks only for openness, honesty and a truly relaxed state to allow you to dig deeply and find ways forward for the development of dance leadership. You are here to learn, share, and let-down your guard. Do question, challenge, provoke and be provoked, and allow yourself to be taken to areas that might be new and a bit scary. I hope the next few days will allow

us all to be open to new ways of thinking, and new ideas for moving dance forward with confidence.

The purpose of the Rural Retreats is simple – to provide a space where you can take time away from your daily lives, to spend time with your peers to share the issues, challenges, concerns and triumphs that face artistic leaders each day. It is also a chance to learn from each other and our guest speakers and be prepared to take on the challenge of 21st century leadership in dance. There won't be a single performance for you to see or a single telephone call to answer, so turn off your blackberrys now! We are asking you all to sign the agreement that we are working to Chatham House rules: "When a meeting, or part thereof, is held, participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed". We are taping the sessions and a report will be produced, but your comments will not be attributed.

We have a structure for the Retreat, to help you to probe more deeply into the areas of concern that you highlighted in your questionnaires. We hope you will gain a deeper understanding of leadership, what it entails and whether it is what you want to do. If it is, then we hope the Retreat will help prepare you to take on its challenges with greater understanding and confidence.

And now for the introductions (everyone has name tags just for tonight). This is Susannah Burke, our brilliant organiser. She will be here all weekend and can answer any queries about travel, accommodation, meals etc. Our two very seasoned facilitators, Sue Hoyle and Christopher Bannerman – who are both back, Sue for a third round and Chris for a fourth! Our guest speakers will start arriving tomorrow and Saturday and will be introduced as they arrive. Their biographies and photographs are in your welcome packs. Please introduce yourselves to them and do spend social time with them!

Some of you have flown from across the world today, so tonight we'll take it easy. There is pre-arranged seating tonight to enable you to meet new people and we'll rotate everyone between the main course and dessert.

Now if we could go around the room and say who you are, where you are from and tell us the one personal reason why you want to be here this weekend.

Provocation

Chris Bannerman and Sue Hoyle

Chris: Welcome to Rural Retreats 2008. We are opening the proceedings with what we call a provocation – a brief statement that is intended to stimulate your ideas and encourage debate – debate which hopefully will continue over the next couple of days.

Sue: Everyone here is united in their passion for dance, but we all come from different cultures, experiences and backgrounds – we work and live in different environments. Given this, we realise that what might be considered provocative in one culture could be offensive in another. Our intention is not to cause offence, and if we do, we apologise. Our hope is to provoke your thinking.

Chris: We should also note that we are speaking English - of course English is widely used internationally, but we may need to use it carefully during the Retreat, allowing time for translation and I need to try and speak slowly - even when I get excited by the debate - so everyone please feel free to remind us, and one another, when we need to slow down to assist communication.

Sue: We'll be posing questions, not providing answers, and if either or both of us appear to take a particular position, don't assume that we believe in what we are saying. Rather we are expressing views that have been put to us, in conversations, on paper from you and in discussion with members of our advisory group. As you will discover over the next couple of days, the two of us are determinedly independent – our role is to listen, to encourage discussion, to ensure that as many people's views as possible are heard, and help you achieve consensus on areas on which you agree to take practical action.

Chris: We need to also set out some ground rules: each of you is here as an individual – you have convinced the selectors that you have the personal qualities, vision and passion that are required for a leadership role. So, you do not represent an organisation here and, as individuals you each have an equal voice at the Retreat - there is no hierarchy involved in the organisation of this event. And please note that I said you do not represent organisations – I did not use the word 'company' for the simple reason that some of you here do not work in a company context. Arguably, dance requires leaders in a number of roles, not simply company artistic directors and, in any case, companies today have wider remits than in the past – they are cultural organisations, not simply dance troupes.

Sue: Our plans for the weekend have been drawn largely from the responses you made to the questionnaires you were sent and your individual discussions with Assis. We have attempted to synthesise the concerns you expressed, but there may be things that have been omitted, or there may be new issues that arise over the course of the weekend and if so, please feel free to make use of the open time to organise your own group discussions, or one to ones – this is your retreat, please use it to your best advantage.

Chris: Of course there may be people here who believe that leaders are born and not made or trained, so you may not feel the need for the debates. I have to say that I have never fully understood this belief – of course innate ability is required to be a leader in dance as in any other field – but does this mean that we do not develop further; that we learn nothing from our experiences and our exchanges with others? This simply does not seem logical or credible to me.

Sue: But we may want to consider how we arrived at this place – what was the journey that led you to apply, and to be selected for a retreat focused on leadership? Do you think you have leadership potential because of your past achievements as a dancer? Or because you were the one who spoke up at company meetings? And what about your motivation for wanting to take on this role? Are the right people putting themselves forward as leaders, for the right reasons? And are the jobs they are applying for still relevant today?

Chris: Can we do more to ensure that individuals with ability, passion, energy and vision are developed as future leaders? Are there ways in which we can be a resource for each other and for the art form as a whole? And what is leadership for the 21st century, a century that looks set to continue the acceleration of change and increasing complexity in every sphere of life – political, economic, environmental, social and artistic? Just think, for instance, of the rapid developments in communications, in global exchange, in the movement of people, in increasingly diverse societies and in the impact of new technologies on every facet of our lives. Does the speed of change mean that leaders will have to renew themselves constantly or face losing touch; and how can one avoid burnout from the attempt to keep up?

Sue: And how can leaders ensure a positive future for dance when the choice of leisure activities and entertainment is growing so rapidly? In the snowstorm of words flying around the world in cyber space, how can a visual, body-based art form grow and develop and take its place as an exciting and relevant art form – both for those in dance and for the public? And frankly, are our leaders in dance equipped by their education, dance experience and professional contacts to debate the issues and engage in outward-looking critical and articulate dialogue? Can you persuade others of the value of dance in today's society? Do you feel that you have access to the vocabulary, knowledge of current debates and the networks that often come from a rigorous academic education, an outward-looking stimulating environment and the right social contacts? The need for an intensive training in dance and the perceived need for leaders in dance to come from that background may exclude us from those benefits which are often possessed by other art forms. If this is a factor in the current status of dance, what can we do about it?

Chris: As we attempt to catch up with the higher status that other art forms often seem to enjoy, can we simultaneously respond to the changing needs of the 21st century? How can we develop the organisational structures and working conditions that can enable the creative growth of individuals and the art form? How can we ensure that dance both reflects and challenges the 21st century societies in which it is located? Can dance organisations as they are currently constructed attract, develop and sustain the people who will move the art form forward?

Dance appears to be increasingly globalised, and those working in dance appear to be more internationally mobile than ever before - what does this mean for the organisations and for those who lead them? And what is the relationship between dance organisations, which are more diverse through globalised dance activity, and our increasingly diverse societies – are the two processes a mirror image of each other, or are there aspects of diverse societies which offer new challenges to dance as a performing art?

Arguably, globally mobile dancers are attracted to our dance companies as they currently exist, whereas increasingly diverse societies need new forms and new voices to attract them to dance. Will we in future be able to reflect and address the concerns of a wider range of our changing societies and attract a wider social range to dance?

Sue: Does this new world mean that leaders must be aware not only of developments across the globe but also aware of societal change at home? How, for example, does the rapidly increasing presence of dance as a global social phenomenon, from participatory television shows to street dance, relate to dance as a performing art? Can our leaders in dance connect to these social trends – should they connect to them?

Chris: It could be that you're already feeling overwhelmed by the scale and complexity of the challenges facing us all. You may have already had a chance to read the article by Toby Norman-Wright, which outlines some Leadership styles that have been identified recently, and you may recognise these strategies from your own experiences. The article does not mention however, the isolation that can accompany leadership responsibilities and the difficulties often faced by leaders in accessing support systems for themselves. Addressing this issue is also an intention of the Retreat.

It's our hope that you can engage with each other in order to exchange ideas, information and perspectives and that this can bring about real change, for you as individuals, for the group as a whole and for dance more broadly. Indeed, that is our ambition for this Retreat. We are here to make a difference and we hope that together we can achieve this goal.

Day 1 – Friday 11 January 2008

Group work

Group 1

Are leaders born or made? What are the ways in which leaders in dance are identified, selected, developed and sustained?

For the purpose of the discussion the group considered that a leader could be a choreographer, a ballet master, or an artistic director. They considered that there were some innate qualities that could be developed, and that others could be learned.

Innate qualities:

- Charisma, including passion and fire
- Integrity, authenticity
- Tenacity, grit
- Ability to have a vision
- Confidence, sense of self
- Courage
- Humility

Learned qualities:

- Ability to listen and to delegate with grace, tact and humility
- Communications
- Able to inspire others
- Sensitivity and empathy
- Balancing the macro and micro view

Leaders need to be identified, developed and sustained. They may be identified by their artistic director, themselves or by others. They can be developed through apprenticeships, mentoring, leadership programmes, formal education, transition centres, web-based resources and development tools. They can be sustained through access to information, continuing education, career advisers, retreats, assessing transferable skills. They need to articulate their own needs.

Discussion explored leaders needing to be aware of their environment, having orientation and sensitivity, and sometimes to dissociate from issues. There was discussion of whether communication is innate or can be learned, and the importance of learning languages for an international career. Humility, the ability to admit when you are wrong or when someone else's idea is better, was considered important.

Group 2

Dance is a non-verbal art form, which may help to explain its relatively low status in formal education and in society more generally. What is the role and purpose of critical rigour and discourse in dance?

Critical discourse is concentrated in the internal dance community. It is the responsibility of leaders to concentrate on the future of the dance industry. The perception of elitism was discussed. It was considered liberating not to continually refer back to the lack of money but to take responsibility to narrow the distance between reality and dreams, to take an

entrepreneurial approach. If dance has low status, then the dance profession needs to address it, to articulate the issues and build higher expectations. This involves all those involved in the profession at every level.

It was recognised that conservatoire education is now broader and that communication is improving between artistic directors and their companies, although the pedagogy of formal classical technique is still rooted in an old-fashioned approach, and knowledge is transferred through traditional ways. The ability to articulate internally, within circles of peers and then to the broader public was discussed, as was the connection between writing and speaking, and the need to empower dancers to understand the choices they have and how they may make decisions.

Group 3

Dance in the twenty-first century requires new organisational structures and different ways of working. What are they?

The group agreed with this statement. They also recognised the differences for different sizes and kinds of organisations, and that a structure should be there to stir the artistic ideals and aspirations of the organisation. Structures provide a business framework for the artistic vision, and include structures of leadership and working principles. Different ways of working were explored, for example the internal commitment needed for a ballet company to develop a slower, more considered process rather than always creating work in a short time frame. The impact of economic and audience issues on artistic decisions was discussed, and it was considered important to have artistic autonomy in order to commit to innovation. Producers were also considered part of the structure for contemporary choreographers; there could be an artistic structure within the organisational structure. Organisations need agility, not always to look internally, or outsourcing, or looking for quick fixes but for long term solutions. Organisations also need loyalty and a sense of identity.

If an organisation's mission statement could apply to any organisation, then it is not specific enough. The vision needs to be clear. Organisations need to believe in what they are doing and in their ability to make change. It was noted that there was little indication of significant change in the area of cultural diversity within companies and their audiences. For smaller companies sustainability is of concern. It was suggested that companies should also be allowed to close, for example when they are no longer serving the art form or when a founder-choreographer leaves. Differences were highlighted in the cultures of Europe, where government subsidies can be very persuasive, and America, where subsidies were rare.

Discussion included the kind of impact that technology is having on young people and approaches to culture. The understanding of options for organisational structures is also changing.

Group 4

Where is the impact of leadership felt? For example, is it in the school, studio or theatre; the Board Room; at fundraising receptions; in the world of politics and media; with other artists and practitioners; or in society more generally?

The group considered the simple answer to this question to be that leadership is felt everywhere. A good leader empowers others, for example by giving dancers a sense of independence. Leadership is as much about what you do not do as about what you do,

about changing behaviours and tuning a group like turning the dial on a radio. It is important to understand the detail, and to step back and trust others.

The group discussed managing the expectations of others about you as a leader, and about the ways in leaders define their own success through the achievements of the people they are leading. Leaders have a responsibility to society. Although dance is not about social work, leaders need to be able to communicate beyond the company. In the absence of good leadership people stop listening and there is a lack of co-ordinated effort. One delegate mentioned that in their company they 'friend-raise and then fund-raise'.

Dancers becoming stronger in voicing their views can be challenging for a director. It was considered that dancers would be less vocal when the vision from the top is strong. Leaders do not have to be liked, but they need to articulate the reasons for their decisions and be credible to the outside world. The ultimate responsibility for leaders is to create the right environment and the right conditions for the work of the company.

General issues of education and training were raised. Few artistic directors have had managerial or executive training, and many people in the room had been working in dance for many years and have had few opportunities to challenge their assumptions about how it operates. The difference between internal debate, including by critics, and audience enjoyment, raised questions about evaluating work and whose opinion matters most. Dancers are often judged by others and self-reflection is important to gain a perspective on the work.

Decisiveness was considered a key factor for leaders facing a range of questions in their everyday life, and the volume of management across the spectrum of the organisation was discussed. The transition from dancer to leader can happen very quickly, and it was considered that this may be similar in sport. There was further discussion about the education and training of dancers. It was suggested that learning to dance was similar to learning a trade. Visual artists are educated to find their own voice, their autonomy and their context in their initial training, whereas for dancers this tends to happen later in their professional career.

Reality Check: Six months into the job
Cathy Marston; Artistic Director, Berne Ballet

I went to the Royal Ballet School at sixteen, and was one of the few students that went there from a secondary school. In the first year there is a parents' day when the parents are invited to watch the students and talk to the teachers. The academic staff and the choreographic staff were all very nice about me, they said I was thoughtful and asked questions, but the ballet teacher was horrified that I asked questions and my parents could not understand why that might be a bad thing. Now I do understand that sometimes in a technique class the students just have to do as they are told and not ask questions, but it also causes other problems as we have been discussing this morning.

After leaving the Royal Ballet School I went to the Lucerne Ballet for three years and then the Berne Ballet for a year. During my time in Switzerland I maintained a relationship with the Royal Opera House. I was invited back every year to make short works in the summer, and that developed into invitations from Anthony Dowell to create on the Royal Ballet. That was a really wonderful opportunity for someone at twenty, twenty-one, to be able to choreograph for this company, and I think it's quite unique. I don't think there are many companies that offer young choreographers that chance. I was grateful for the time off to take up these opportunities, but it was more difficult in Berne and eventually I moved back to London to dance and choreograph with various companies.

Hearing the discussion just now made me aware of how unprepared I was for my current position. The opportunity came up, and of course if a chance like that comes up you take it, which I did. Now I'm thinking on my feet. I knew I wanted to be a director, and The Royal Opera House gave me a chance to work with a few freelance dancers on a fairly regular basis, and that was such a joy that I just wanted it all the time. Together with a sponsor of mine we started to form a project-based company and it was while waiting for the funding to come through that I was asked to go to Switzerland and found myself in an interview talking about the kind of company that I'd like to have. It was all very fast.

I wasn't completely unprepared of course because I'd been dancing in Berne before, so I knew some of the background to the company. It's a fourteen dancer company with actually thirteen dancers and one assistant. The theatre is a chocolate box-looking theatre and seats about seven hundred people. It's fairly well equipped, and until now they've had one studio in the basement which is really very miserable, but the news that I received in the interview was that they'd acquired a new space on the other side of town, which was being converted into a new studio and warehouse stage seating about three hundred and fifty people. It's a nice big performing area and next door we were having a new studio built. So I was coming into quite a privileged situation for which three or four previous directors had been campaigning.

It was a new situation, and there was support for a ballet company that would tour and I liked the man I met at interview and thought I could work with him. My instinct was good. The dance department was new, the PR was new, everything was pretty much new. While that had issues, it was also an exciting moment for me to join a whole new company of people. My immediate predecessor had created a lot of experimental work, but that had lost public support. We are going back to a repertoire system with three pieces a year being

made by me and two programmes for the main stage and one for the warehouse stage each year.

In the first year I had no control over the budget, I proposed ideas that were either accepted or rejected. This year, thank goodness, I have a budget to work from. I didn't know who did what in the theatre and wish I'd gone over beforehand and got someone to explain it all to me. The dramaturgy department is very different. In the UK they might work on the scenario with me, but in Switzerland they write the programme, give audience talks, look at the artistic programme, the publicity, the context of the theatre in the city, future planning, and none of them are specifically designated to the ballet. We also don't have a manager or a secretary, so my 'team' is me, and my two amazing assistant/dancers. The first decision I made was to create a second assistant/dancer and invite my long-term collaborator and best friend to take up the post. I think it's the hardest job in a ballet company to be that in-between person, especially where there's no secretary and no manager, but it has worked brilliantly. They have split the teaching and the ballets that they look after; they support each other and we are a unit.

The second thing I had to do was to audition the dancers, which of course was horrible for me. Having said that, it was also quite easy because I explained the company that I had in mind was very different to the existing one. Only a couple of dancers stayed, but I don't think there was any resentment actually, I think it was all fairly amicable.

The hardest thing of course at that point was deciding what my priorities were. My experience has been so wide, and I enjoyed that spectrum. But with fourteen dancers you can't do everything, you have to decide what your priorities are and which direction you're going in. My answer was dancers who were classically trained, with some contemporary, creative, and improvisation experience, who were open to narrative work and intelligent. I auditioned two hundred dancers, from five hundred applications. It was living on the edge because I was thinking about the repertoire that I might do, and putting together a company and wondering what happens if one of them drops out, trying to get the balance right. I was so disappointed by how dishonest dancers can be, they accepted contracts then dropped out. One asked for time off very close to the start date, which I understood the reasons for, but it was very difficult financially. I am interested in having guest dancers and creating opportunities for older dancers, but the logistics can make this impossible.

Deciding the repertoire was another complicated issue. The budget of course isn't huge, and there's no-one to negotiate so I'm trying to find the repertoire and also barter for it, which is horrible. One of the challenges was that one programme needed to use the symphony orchestra, and with fourteen dancers you don't want to use more than ten; a piece for ten dancers but sixty musicians is quite challenging.

Well the reality check was you can't always get the dancers that you want and you have to make choices. Actually it kind of worked.

We came together in August, and the first task was to get stationery for the office. We had a new studio, with no administration, and we had to build a company. We spent the first ten days doing workshops, then we did improvisation and task work. I'd interviewed all of the dancers in the audition and taken care to make sure that I felt they were all going to get on and be compatible in the future. I wanted to make people confident with each other, open to throwing ideas out and being creative. We also went on picnics and had lots of parties -

the group bonding really hasn't let up, and it's still the honeymoon period. I'm not quite sure when that will be over but it's very nice.

The difficulty came when I started to create a narrative piece. There were two difficulties. One was that dancers aren't taught to act, a lot of them found the concept of telling a story and being someone else very strange. Talking about it, and encouraging the dancers to read and research helped. Another problem was one of the dancers from the previous company who I had kept because he was creative. As soon as we started working it became apparent that he stuck out like a sore thumb, even in the more contemporary work. I had to tell him within six weeks of starting that I was taking him out of programmes and would not be renewing his contract the following year, and I absolutely hated it. I no longer have the luxury of inviting dancers to work on a specific project, I have to build a company. It has been really hard to work out how much of a chance to give people. I want my dancers to be inspired and nurtured, and not just work with the dancers I like best, but this is difficult. Sometimes the nicest people don't have the capability the company needs.

Language is a major issue. I feel it is a handicap that I can't express myself to the wider public in their language, and I don't have time to learn. There is a lot of dance in Switzerland, but little that is Swiss, so the question of cultural identity is complex. Berne has a population of around 300,000, which is quite small and attracting audiences has been a concern. There are no audience studies or email lists, and I have found the marketing frustrating. Being part of an institution where a number of areas are not under your control is frustrating. I am used to being in control of the look of the poster, whether information went out by post or email – so I have been trying to build relationships and inviting people in to watch rehearsals – word of mouth works well in Berne. I also give talks with every performance, and these are starting to work, but it takes time.

As a choreographer you can choose whether to read the critics, but as a Director I have to know what is being said about the company. The premiere had gone really well, standing ovations and a really positive response. The critics agreed that the company was much stronger and liked the direction, but saw *'Firebird'* as old-fashioned. I found this hard, as there is nothing old-fashioned in the choreography. I have had support from some British critics and the ex-Minister of Culture who have helped me understand this response from a different perspective, to see where my work sits in a British tradition. I am not sure how much you can consider this when making work, but in choosing repertoire you do need to think about your audience while maintaining your own integrity in making those choices.

I think there are different levels at which to nurture creativity in a company. The first is within the dancers, we're doing a company workshop and while I'm here the dancers are working on their own pieces. I don't feel that I'm a teacher of choreography yet, and that is something I would love to talk about. I would also like to talk about the kind of parameters to give choreographers when they are invited to make work for the company. I gave three choreographers free reign in creating fifteen minute pieces, but then realised I should have given them more guidance. I certainly find time to think creatively is virtually impossible, whether to think about my own work or making decisions about the work of choreographers that I'm watching on video.

To end on a positive note, we are working on a piece I did for the Royal Opera House, *'Ghost'*, and it seems to be bringing the whole company together. They are acting with complete commitment, and that quality has become admired by all the dancers. I find this really exciting. I really admire companies that have something unique, and seeing my

company develop its unique quality is special and satisfying. I am starting to believe that this is worth doing, it is a steep learning curve, but an exciting journey.

Finally, there are a couple of questions that I have. Can a director have a personal life? The hours are long and you are isolated, especially in a foreign country. So the company becomes your family unit. In a way this feels lovely, but I am not sure to what extent I can be friends with the dancers. My other question is about developing a company that is not really yours, you did not start it and someone else can replace you. What would I have then? How could I recognise and know what I would have learned? As much as I need plans for Berne, I need plans for me, to know where I am and where it is taking me. I would be interested in talking about this too.

Discussion

In response to the last question, a participant queried whether the needs of the artist and the needs of the company were so very different. The company is an expression of the artist, the fact that the artist can be replaced by another who might take the company in a different direction was not that different to the situation facing all employees.

One way of overcoming the loneliness of the position might be to build connections and friendships with artists and directors in other Swiss cities, to talk and share some of the common problems. Other arts institutions, not only dance ones, can also be a source of information, support and advice. Dancers also need loyalty from the director, they dance for their director and will take them on a journey too. In the West there is more of a sense of owning things, in the East it is more usual to experience them and pass them on.

The ballet does not have its own Board of Directors, but comes under the Theatre. They do show interest, but it is less clear that they are committed to the ballet. Involving volunteers and "Friends" in different tasks was discussed. Despite having a number of challenges, it is important to stay positive. The difference between being a choreographer and a director was further discussed, and differences in different parts of the world highlighted.

The group was grateful for Cathy being so open in sharing the challenges six months into the job. She had demonstrated aspects of good leadership in practice – confidence, openness, good judgement, dealing with difficult situations, and courage.

The Challenges of Leadership

Zoë van Zwanenberg

As a leader you have to be thinking on multiple levels all the time. You are leading an organisation and a community. You have to know yourself and be yourself. You are a role model, always under observation, so you need to think about how you are presenting yourself and how you are behaving. You are leading others and that is a huge challenge. It encompasses all parts of the organisation and in some cases, for example when leading a national company, you are leading the dance sector.

You need to think about your vision, how you are communicating it and whether everyone is buying into it. You also need to think about how you are expressing your leadership, and this is particularly difficult for a choreographer/director. For example, how much time should you give to making your own work? You cannot always be in the studio and invisible to the rest of the company. You have to lead the whole organisation, not just part of it. You also need to think about the money and where it is coming from. You may have to go along with sponsors, as long as you are not compromising your artistic integrity. You need to think about the profile of the company, who do you need to talk to and influence and ensure you and your Chair are both saying the same things. You have to be there, visible and smiling.

The core things to think about are:

- **Purpose** – you need a clear vision and know what you want to do
- **People** – you need the right people around you
- **Process** – you need to get the business processes right
- **Performance** – on and off stage, artistic excellence and excellent governance of the company, the two have to go together

What do leaders do?

- **Think** – critically and analytically, you need time to think and reflect. Everyone is busy but you need to make the time, and it could be helpful to have an Executive Coach to help you think
- **Envision** – paint the picture and enthuse others, be articulate about what the company stands for and look to the future
- **Communicate** – brilliantly, talk to people, write or get others to write for you, get help if you need it but get everyone in the organisation to buy-in to the vision
- **Build teams** – this is more proactive than managing others, everyone can be better than they are and you need everyone to do a good job and to work together
- **Lead change** – leadership is about change, about moving things on and supporting the change
- **Take a strong stand** – everyone needs to understand who you are. Ask lots of questions, and watch others in management and chairing positions. The best leaders demonstrate a strong sense of their own values and ethics.

Leadership is not right for everyone and not everyone wants to be a leader. Everyone can develop as a leader, but you need to want to do it. Zoë mentioned that she has had coaches and mentors throughout her career; they are particularly helpful during times of change.

There are different types of leaders:

- **Heroic** – they are good in a crisis, but also create crises and thrive on them; they are usually high energy, focused, good communicators, direct and controlling
- **Entrepreneurial** – they take risks and pull things in from different places in different ways, and they do the same thing over and over again despite failures
- **Managerial** – every organisation needs one of these, they make organisations work over the long term and are always improving systems
- **Thought Leaders** – they are very creative; are uncomfortable to have around and ask difficult questions
- **Social Leaders** – these are the unsung leaders, for example the man who started the Samaritans, we don't know who they are, they build teams of people who believe in something and go on and on. This is how big social movements happen; the team is developed and given the space to move forward; the success of the work matters more than personal success, but most of us want personal acknowledgement.

Feedback is vital for leaders, and 360 degree feedback is a good start. People need to know your boundaries and standards. You need to be ruthless about these, your values must be consistent.

Day 2 – Saturday 12 January

Summary of Day 1

Sue Hoyle began the day by talking about how extraordinary the previous day had been and identifying three themes that had struck her as particularly significant.

Change: As a group, you are open to change. You recognise the need for it and ready to embrace it. As a group you want to drive change and are willing to take the necessary action. The group had talked about needing to make a big turn of the wheel just to turn the super-tanker around, and that it takes a long time for its effect to be felt. Zoë had summed up a lot of the group's thinking, about the need for critical analytical powers in order to make the first change. You need vision, to be able to paint the picture, to tell the story and to enthuse others. You need to be brilliant communicators and you need to build a team. And you need to have a really strong sense of your own values and ethics and stand by them.

Responsibility and resourcefulness: One group talked about a tendency to victimhood and to blame others, but as a whole group you said that you felt you needed to take responsibility both individually and collectively. You thought it was liberating to stop complaining about the lack of money and to think about what you could do to bring about change. What you were saying is it needs a really practical can do approach, and I think that sort of attitude is something Kathy so eloquently demonstrated when she told her story. Don't hang onto the old assumptions you said, find new problems and new ways of doing things. You said that you need to talk to the "middle generation", to young practitioners and to senior artists, to be articulate, to build expectations and to encourage critical thinking. Initially you have to find your own voice, then talk with your peers and then the broader public. In other words the message that I took is that you need to be inwardly resourceful for the future.

You talked about large dance organisations needing agility and to look for long-term solutions rather than rely on others to make a quick fix. Technical training and intellectual discourse are not in opposition to each other, and can be mutually beneficial. Good leaders empower others, so dance leaders need to respect the potential of dancers.

Making choices, taking decisions: You all recognise the importance of the ability to make choices and take decisions, however unpopular. Kathy gave us a reality check; it is great to be empathetic, to be sympathetic, to be friendly, but sometimes she has to take a tough position and to make difficult decisions. You may have to be ruthless, and be sure that it is consistent and within the boundaries and standards that you have set.

These were some of the things you talked about yesterday; many others were mentioned that we have not really had time to explore, such as technology and drawing in the lessons from other young art forms and means of communication, such as film. Kathy raised a number of issues, such as how to nurture creativity in others, help dancers develop as choreographers and encourage a real dialogue with the audience.

Today we are going to focus on how you make choices and decisions within a context. We are going to talk about managing systems, people's expectations, and the interface between

art and the public. Each of the three groups will take a different focus, then we will try and plait the strands together.

Group work

Each group was offered a primary and a secondary question, but focused on the questions highlighted below.

Group A

How do you make the case for the value of dance to those who are opinion-formers and decision-takers?

We began by talking about the value of dance and decided that there wasn't a single, specific answer. We were comfortable with the idea that there were universal values, such as promoting physical awareness, creativity, national identity, economic and social health, and sustaining the expression of cultural heritage and traditions. Then there are specific values depending on location, a kind of site-specific set of values. We talked about the danger of making economic arguments because they don't really bolster our arguments and we felt it was better to be truthful and not hide behind economic or social agendas.

We identified a list of possible opinion-formers and decision-makers that included people like the press, arts councils and celebrities. We wondered whether we needed a David Beckham to access a significant percentage of the population and the press. Is it our responsibility to create those celebrities who which people can relate to? Or can we access celebrities to get our messages across? Can we enhance our image through association with others?

We talked about the public that we engage with, and the potential of our organisations and our Boards of Directors. There was a lot of conversation about the decision-makers within our organisations and how we convince them to be our advocates. The political advocacy world has enormous impact, so how do we work with them, and with the arts councils, unions, foundations and public donors? We talked about contributing to or supporting the work of regional and national dance service organisations, and ways of contributing to organisations that are supporting and advocating for dance.

To what extent does the programme have a role in opinion-making? Thinking about this was a light-bulb moment and put other arguments into perspective. It is the primary way of connecting with anyone, and we must advocate for it.

Is the value of dance site-specific or organisationally specific? Whatever the message is, it needs to be internally consistent while being presented differently for the press, funders and different audiences.

Discussion

There are different arguments to be made for different phases of presenting work. Arguing for funding is different to making arguments to presenters, and the arguments that they take to their local audience. You have to take into account the needs of the person you are talking to. The question is more about how the message is packaged and delivered; your mission needs to stay the same. Others, such as arts councils have to make arguments on our behalf that we do not necessarily subscribe to but must respect.

How much influence should we allow opinion-formers to have on the art itself? How much do we listen to critics, to our Boards? You are constantly bombarded with opinions and critical feedback from your dancers and your staff, from everyone in the company. How

much do you stick to your corner and how much do you really value other's opinions and are willing to act on them?

There was discussion about funding that is insufficient to deliver the proposed project and whether it may be better to turn down the funding rather than dilute the project, and it was noted that this was a common concern in other art forms, for example in film production. Ideals are important, and so is realism and practicality.

Group B

How do you convince the internet generation to walk through the doors of a theatre and buy tickets to watch dance?

The group agreed that it is possible to link the internet generation with the live human experience of dance. They questioned whether the internet can add value to the live performance, or whether it is perfect value in itself. It gives enormous access, twenty-four / seven, offering information and insights into a creative process, artists' lives and personalities. In terms of reaching large numbers of people immediately, email is a great tool. Webcams can take the public into rehearsal and backstage areas and make the process of presenting work more tangible. Technology is a tool that can create more interaction and interconnection with our audiences, although virtual experience is not the same as the reality of a live human experience.

Audiences for dance are often older, and messages and methods aimed at younger people can be alienating. We need to have cross-generational impact. The power of young people to influence their parents was also noted.

Social networking and other internet sites can provide a way of promoting discussion, and a national and international link service, for example like Amazon's 'if you liked that then try this' approach. The example of live performances being beamed to cinemas and large screens was discussed. Should directors be more open to different ways of presenting companies? There are questions about artists' rights and payments that need to be thought about and built into contracts, as has happened at The Royal Ballet.

Technology changes culture too.

Group C

The best form of leadership is collaborative. Do you agree?

While the idea of collaborative leadership is attractive, the thought of moving forward with ninety people being part of the decision-making process seems unrealistic. So we decided that we do not agree with the statement in terms of form, but we do in terms of a style of leadership. Artistically, collaboration is an integral part of the process, but someone still needs to take final responsibility. Expectations are critical, together with mutual respect, teamwork and clear boundaries.

We looked at an organisation with five directors, each one with responsibility for a different division – legal, artistic, management, staff and administration, and politics. They are united by a common goal and it works, but there is also a primary director who acts as a kind of Chairman. Leaders can set the context for co-operation and collaboration. Great leaders

are great listeners, take advice from a range of sources, take decisions and take responsibility.

Making choices – making decisions

Each of the three guest speakers had ten minutes to introduce themselves and the areas they would be talking about. After this the participants could decide who they wanted to work with and organise themselves into groups of about eight people. The participants would have to make choices, and that was the focus of the afternoon.

Zoë van Zwaneberg: *Introduction*

Making choices and making decisions is what leadership is about. It is about the way you make those choices and make those core decisions, the approaches you are taking, who you are engaging in those approaches and who you are not. Earlier we were talking about how you have to start thinking consequences all the time - if I do this, what's going to be the outcome of that? What's the range of potential to follow on from that? What's the worst thing that can happen as well as what's the best thing? You could draw that spectrum for yourself, and then you could make the decision.

Frank Andersen: *Developing the team*

I firstly want to say that I am really happy to be here. Five years ago I was lucky enough to attend my first Retreat as you are now, and I learnt a tremendous amount. One of my principles is that we are never too old to learn. I am here to share with you what I learnt from my experience, and to give you some tools you can use in your future life as you may be coming directors.

Everything I'm saying today is on the individual scale. You quickly realise that you are the boss, say dance and they will dance, say stop and they will stop. You have to believe in yourself and trust your judgement, and if you're in doubt, then don't do it. You can continually correct your course, just as you would in rehearsal, so try to get things right the first time but don't be afraid to correct if necessary.

The company that I am directing is a family. We have the school in the theatre, with seventy-five children who are, in a sense, growing up into the company. You have to gather your family around you, we are a family of a hundred and forty and everybody has to know where we're going and why. You have to know how to talk to them and motivate them. I want to share my values and the way I run my company with you, it works for me but may not work for you.

Presentation: The art of making choices / making decisions

Frank Andersen gave a presentation that included the following points:

Vision

There is no vision without a plan – and no plan without a vision. Directors are in charge of a business so we can learn from business and business can learn from us. For example it can be an asset to be a 'soft' director as our resource is people. Vision needs ideas, strategies, information, dialogue, communication and inspiration. Keeping a note of ideas is important,

and Frank's way of directing a company emphasises keeping people informed and keeping dialogue going, particularly with the principals as they are role models within the company, and to communicate all the time. Frank believes in democracy, not dictatorship. Directors need to inspire and be inspired, go out and see as much work as possible, at all scales, and go to see the work rather than to be seen.

The vision needs to be understood by the company, not just one dancer – it is the whole that makes the company, and by the administration – you need to spend time with them too. Never whisper! Everyone needs to know what you expect from them, discipline is important, not fear. Younger dancers need to mix with soloists and principals as it helps them to understand what is expected of them. You need to know what it is that you want to create and how you want to create it, and to plan for doing it. Stay curious! Vision never ends, it is a rolling process. Frank involves his senior management team in regular one or two-day think tanks.

Needs

You need to identify your personal needs and wishes. You need the right people around you and the right structure. It is important to be present when financial decisions are taken and to work closely with the administration team. Your PA is invaluable in giving you time and freedom to think. Frank recommends that you stop dancing or teaching when you take over as Director, so you need to think about teachers and dancers too.

Dare to have ambitious intentions, dare to admit that “we want to be the best”, and you need the will-power to go for exactly that. Martha Graham said “mediocrity is the only sin”. Cynicism is a necessary resource, and reality will superimpose everything!

The team

Building your team is like gathering your family, you need to follow your instinct but take advice. You need to think about how you are going to hire, how you will choose and decide. You need to keep your integrity; there will always be choices and you have to decide. Select your team for quality and the needs of your vision, not from your friends. Take your time, involve the first members of the team in the selection of the next ones, and remember that it is you that makes the decision. Your team will liberate and inspire you, move your ideas forward and generate new ideas. Have confidence, and create confidence, in your team. Keep information, dialogue and communication flowing. The success of your team equates with the length of your next holiday. Your job is to create the room, frame the picture and mark out the playground.

You need to empower your team by delegating responsibility, trusting them and checking – the ballet world works within a framework of certainty. Team-building sessions, for example 2-day away-days involving the whole company, starting with 1:1s, then in small groups to deal with issues such as values, are essential. Every member of your team must be given the opportunity for further development, offered options for development in the areas of art, finance, technology, leadership etc. Every member of your team should also have an annual interview with you – the dancers as well as the administration – this is required by Danish law.

Directing

This is the fire within. You need to think about how you direct. The Artistic Director has a number of fundamental tools that they can use:

- Responsibility – you have to take responsibility

- Discipline – is a requirement on you and others
- Motivation – commend and reward, sharing know-how; being uninformed creates irritation, insecurity and fear – information is power and includes knowing what is required, where we are going, how to do it and get there, information and communication lead to quality
- Uncompromising – about quality and success, success liberates and builds success
- Ambition – there are no limits to what you can do, “life is too short for poor wine”, we only accept the very best
- Targeting – to create the best ballet company, and the best workplace for ballet in the world, promote pride, delight, enthusiasm, make your employees believe in the project and give the 100% back-up
- The feeling of family – create the feeling of mutuality, choose your words carefully – us not 1 – we can move mountains together and the boss is in the front line in the bad times, be sensitive and adopt an open door policy
- Ease of mind – create the optimal framework for personal development, no-one should ever feel left on their own, ease of mind is a feeling of security
- Honesty – never lie to your employees, be truthful about why they were not given a particular role, a dancing career is short but development in life never ends, honesty on stage reaches beyond the pit
- Love – ballet is a devotion, Frank is moved by every member of his company. Create joy on a daily basis.

Reid Anderson: *Accountability and artistic vision*

I think one of the most important things I ever learned about being a director is to be able to say you were wrong. I’m going to talk from the heart. You will hear about how I’ve been a dancer for seventeen years working with John Cranko, and been a ballet master at the same time. I was working on both sides of the company, doing the planning, the casting, coaching the principals and the corps de ballet. Then I led the ballet, and eventually decided to leave Stuttgart and return to my native Canada where I did a variety of things before becoming Director of Ballet British Columbia.

I will give you a taste of what this has been like. While in Stuttgart I took a two-year teacher’s training course. I have choreographed for various companies, coped with dancers back-talking about me and will talk about what it is like to choreograph and what it is like not to choreograph.

What I really learned with Ballet British Columbia was modesty about money. In Stuttgart we never had to worry about that. The words marketing and development were totally new to me, it was the first time that I ever had to raise money or work with a Board and subscribers.

I brought Cranko works that had not been seen in Canada, and ‘Europeanised’ this small company. We went around Canada on tour, and when someone asked if I was going to apply for The National Ballet of Canada I said no, I’m really happy, I’ve just started in Vancouver, it’s great. Director of The National Ballet of Canada is a really job, it is a big company and a bit overwhelming, just like British Columbia but ten times bigger and fund-raising was a big concern. In seventeen years in Toronto, I raised eighteen million dollars. Eventually there was a cut in our government funding and I decided I did not want to do it anymore.

In Stuttgart I have government funding and I do not fund-raise anymore and I have no-one over me. It is the biggest three discipline theatre complex in Europe, like a small city. My dancers are civil servants and paid thirteen or fourteen months a year, with all the benefits of others who work for the City. We dance a hundred and twenty performances in Stuttgart alone, in three different theatres, and tour for several weeks a year. My Board is made up of politicians from the City and the State.

Alistair Spalding: *Making programming decisions*

Making decisions is about ninety-five per cent of the job. Of course the chief thing is making the right one. And the second thing is realising there are two kinds of decision-makers – one is on a micro level and one is on a macro level. In my job, the micro level is choosing which companies are coming to the Theatre. The macro level is much more important.

I will talk about decisions where there are not many choices, and the macro decisions that you need to make about direction. The most important macro decision that I have made at Sadler's Wells was to start producing our own work again and to have a focus on dance – to say that Sadler's Wells is a dance house. When I became Chief Executive three years ago I stood up and said Sadler's Wells is going to be the dance house for London. In fact, Sadler's Well had been there for eight years as a dance house for London, but you just have to keep reiterating these things, otherwise they do not register.

I decided to try and make Sadler's Wells more contemporary in its field, and that was another massive decision. The other important thing is that once you've achieved some things, you have to keep thinking about what's going to happen next. For us, that was to start expanding our activity outside Sadler's Wells, thinking of our commitment to the Peacock Theatre, for financial reasons and in terms of content that would create a 'brand'.

Another thing I'll talk about is making yourself distinctive, because there are lots of companies all vying for the same zones. You have to think about yourself within all the choices that can be made and decide what makes you stand out. My other big bugbear is producing work, which I've always done in some sense. More recently, we've taken on big projects and seen them through from beginning to the end. In some cases, a group of creative artists are put together and left to get on with it. For me producing starts when you find the money and choose your team, and the process begins and you have to take responsibility as a producer until it reaches the stage, otherwise it could end in disaster. If it does, then it is your fault, the fault of the producer not the artists.

Creating the right environment in an institution is an issue. In most large institutions, and even small institutions, there are no creative spaces, and unless you attend to that you won't create any great work. And when I arrived at Sadler's Wells it was a really uncreative space. People used to come and perform there but nothing was ever happening in the theatre. One of my jobs has been to change that through providing physical support, and most importantly, by getting a critical mass of creative people working in the organisation, people who can make change within the organisation.

The last thing I will talk about is the importance of understanding your context. Sadler's Wells is in London, where forty per cent of the population are not white, and I personally believe it's very important to include everyone in what we are doing. Only 14% of our income comes from the government, the rest we have to raise. But that 14% is paid for by the people of London, and if we only include a small proportion of them then that is wrong. I also believe in a diverse programme because it is more interesting creatively. When we present the work of Akram Khan it embodies life in London – the choice of musicians and dancers is representative of what you see on any bus in London. So when people come to Sadler's Wells, they relate to it because it means something to them. It is obviously art, it is different, but it relates to what is going on outside.

Discussion

At the end of the afternoon, the group was invited to share the important things that would make a difference to their thinking.

Frank Andersen

Frank Andersen had provided a blueprint for running a ballet company, and one participant had found the session confirmed a direction he believed in and he had found that really helpful. Frank was asked whether there was one thing that he had learned through experience that he wished he had learned earlier, to which he replied – to listen. There is tremendous value in listening rather than believing you have all the answers. There was general agreement that information is really important, as is transparency in an organisation and involving different levels of the organisation in the creative and administrative aspects of its work. The role of the choices the director takes in making the company distinctive was found to be illuminating.

Alistair Spalding

Alistair Spalding had suggested it was helpful to try to be right the first time. Participants had found it very exciting to be with him and had been impressed by the notion that you should not over-estimate the audience but that you had to respect them. They noted that the organisation is a reflection of its leader, and the value of having a leadership coach. Alistair is obviously proud of his organisation and that was inspiring. You need to be secure in yourself, and bring your vision to the Board rather than the detail. You need to have your script in your head so that your argument is always ready and clear. Never mind what the question is in interviews, make sure you get your message across. Sadler's Wells allocates a producer to every one of its productions, not to be concerned with it artistically but to take care of the people. The organisation has an infrastructure that allows different individuals and departments to develop their own relationships with the artists, so everyone feels involved in the work.

Alistair talked about the ways in which choices are limited, not only for financial reasons but also in terms of the scope of the art form, for example in considering inviting associate artists. Risk-averse decisions are not the only answer, but sometimes they are the right course of action. He also talked about the importance of having a unique identity, you need to know what makes you stand out among all the other companies. He also talked about the Board acting as advisors, rather than trying to run it, and the Sadler's Wells Board seems to carry out its role really well.

Reid Anderson

Reid Anderson had talked about the legacy of the company and how he had learned from Cranko that generosity begets generosity. Making allowances to accommodate dancers and enabling them to gain enriched experiences and a wider viewpoint were important aspects of the company. The emphasis was on quality, and quality speaks for itself so it is really important to cultivate it. One participant had found the notion of learning to walk into problems very helpful. Reid remembered sitting in his office in the early days, not wanting to walk out into the hallway because he did not want to encounter another problem. Then he realised that he needed to walk down the hallway frequently, so that people knew he was there and could talk to him. Once you walk into the theatre you are there for everyone else, and you are there as a problem-solver. His mother had told him that when you iron a shirt you should always do the hard parts first, then you have something to look forward to!

Conclusion

All three speakers had demonstrated great passion for what they do, a total belief that it is worth the effort, and a real pride in what they do personally and what they enable others to achieve. All the speakers were thanked for sharing their experience with the group.

Day 3 – Sunday 13 January

Graham Taylor OBE: *Managing People to achieve success – can dance pick up some tips from the premiere league?*

This isn't the first time that I've spoken to a group of people, and the first thing that I want to do is to have them all in my view. I watch your behaviour and look for signals and whether they are telling me anything about you. Getting your attention is my responsibility, so little things like observing and stepping back to make sure you are listening can be helpful. Now it may seem silly, but sometimes it's the very basic things that we forget. You are going into leadership, if you're not already in it, you're going to be responsible for the success or otherwise of your organisation, and believe me if it's otherwise you will be responsible. You will need to be in control, not a control freak, but you need to control the situation.

Whether it is my football squad or my dancing squad, I need "us" to be successful. Not me, not you, we. So I need to get to know you, not just as dancers, but as people; so I have the birthdays of all of my players, their wives, their wedding anniversary, and the names of their children. In the main it won't be your ability as dancers that will ensure we succeed, it will be your personality. I have to get to know twenty-seven of you individually. I need to know what sort of person you are, what makes you happy, and what makes you perform at your best.

I also have to make sure that all twenty-seven of you are a team. I've been so impressed by your fitness and dedication. Footballers are a group of young lads and do not have your discipline. I need to get hold of them quickly, stop them talking and get them to concentrate. I don't think there's any major difference between what you want to achieve and what, in one respect, I have achieved.

We do know that professional footballers, and now I know dancers too, often don't have the courage to step forward and be the leader, to take the front seat. In 1972, I was 23 years old, a footballer with Lincoln City and struggling with a hip injury. The manager was sacked, and in seven days I went from being one of 24 players to being the manager. The first few days the players were calling me Graham, then I told them it is 'boss' now, and that is a difference with the dance profession.

In my early years as a manager I still played with the team, and would tell myself that I was showing them by example. I wanted to do it, I wanted to be part of the team but the time came when I had to ask myself whether the training session was for them or for me. You will recognise that growing up with training and being physically fit is special, and seeing that fitness slide away is hard. For dancers and footballers, you have to prepare for coming out of your career as a performer while moving into leadership. If you want to be friends with your team, your role as a leader will be diminished. If you are making decisions about people, you have to step back.

Another situation you can relate to is the notion that great performers become great directors. I was a lower division player and became the England manager. You do not need to have performed at the highest level to lead the highest level performers. It may help to have shared that experience, but sometimes the very best find it hard to transmit their genius to others.

If your job is to pull others up to perform at their best, or better, first you need to pull yourself up. If you're not enthusiastic about your job, you've got no chance. Enthusiasm makes you get up out of bed each morning and enables you to do the job and succeed. So many footballers cannot cope with not being footballers. There are perceptions about footballers not being very bright and earning too much money, so they do not receive much sympathy when they retire. Top players may earn millions, but they earn many more millions for their employers. But the perception isolates them from the man in the street, and especially from the working-class man in the street.

Football is a global success but is moving away from its working-class supporters, for example by teams arriving at the ground in a coach with blacked-out windows or by the high cost of a season ticket. The global nature of the game is dictating kick-off times that are designed to suit the overseas viewing markets. Leaders need to find ways to adapt to global changes over which they have no control as much as to local change that they can influence. Dance and football are both global, many of our best footballers are from overseas and it is the same in dance. My concern though is that until you give a home-grown player the chance at the big job, how will you know how good he can be? At the same time there are international opportunities for home-grown players and dancers.

It seems to me that there will always be people willing to offer advice. I am not too happy about the number of support staff coming into football. I welcome experts, but who do you listen to? It can be confusing, and whatever decision you take will be seen as your decision. You need to believe in your own judgement.

Discussion

The need to be yourself, rather than trying to be too clever about handling people was discussed. The role of psychologists, in being someone for players to talk to when they felt they could not talk to the manager, could be helpful; but sometimes just talking to someone else could be just as helpful. It is a tough life and very few players make it to a professional contract, never mind the England team. Lack of success frequently means the manager is sacked, so you cannot get too close to your players.

Assessing players is part of the job. Being empathetic and straightforward is a difficult balance to achieve. You have to live with your decisions even when there is a lot of pressure from people who think you were wrong. We can get trapped into being too close and too committed, so you need to maintain a perspective on the problems or they will take over your life. Football is an all-male environment, so joking is common. In dance intimacy is more common, so getting too close to people must be more of an issue; it will create enemies of other people, and diminish your role as a leader.

The impact of a new manager in turning around an underachieving football team caused one participant to wonder whether there is something in performers that seeks approval from the person in charge. The fresh start that a new manager brings is part of the impetus for change, people become more attentive and success motivates further success, although there are dangers in succeeding too early and with insufficient time to prepare for it. Footballers can play a first class game and still lose, or play a poor game and still win, but only the result matters.

It may be that the best dancers, footballers, directors and managers have good instincts and the ability to go beyond what they have learned. In dance we tend to focus on the physical

and talk about bodies rather than about dancers as people. A difference between football and dance is that performances take on a life of their own, when the curtain goes up small things happen that shift the whole performance and choreographers do not usually stand in the wings shouting at the dancers. In football very little is predictable. At half time there is about fifteen minutes to talk to the players. Usually there is only time for one point, there is no time for major changes. Give the difficult messages first, and remember you are there to help your team. It can be helpful to give difficult messages to individuals in their familiar environment where they feel more relaxed.

Football managers are selected by the Chairman and Board of Directors. Now every footballer has an agent, and the owner, rather than the Chairman is making final decisions, as has been happening in America for years. This is changing the culture of football. Being at the top of the league is so important and players can be bought to lift teams higher up the league. It may be that eventually owners will be selecting the players and managers will become the equivalent of a head coach. Already the Chairman will meet and negotiate with the player's agent rather than with the player.

Can dance learn anything from football about raising profile, attendances and finances? From the perspective of football, the dance profession seems fragmented and lacking in quality control and structure. There is no equivalent of a governing body, like the Football Association. This makes it difficult to understand, but dance affects the viewer even without knowing anything about it. The critic's reports in the press tell you nothing about the enjoyment you experience when you watch dance.

Graham Taylor's Ten Commandments

1 Attitude

Your talent determines what you can do.
Your motivation determines how you are willing to do it.
Your attitude determines how well you do it.
Attitude is your responsibility.

2 Tackle adversity

Whether a person is at the top or the bottom of any organisation they have to solve problems.
No person achieves anything in life without overcoming obstacles.
Expect obstacles.

3 Sense of purpose

Stay focused on your original and primary purpose.
Do not be sidetracked.

4 Make sacrifices

Do not moan about it. Most losing teams / organisation are overpopulated with people who constantly complain. They draw your enthusiasm and energy.
You have to pay a price for success.

5 Adapt or die

Embrace change as a fact of life. Your career is always in transition. When you reach the top there is still further to go.
Stay focused on the basics.

6 Chase your dreams

Everything starts with a dream – it fuels your enthusiasm and vision. It gives you a burning desire to get up in the morning.
Believe in your dreams.

7 Nurture your self image

A positive self image grows out of having a strong and honest character. To achieve this there are three qualities that you should possess. These qualities are so important that they stand on their own as a commandment:

- Trustworthiness
- Excellence
- Care

8 Foster trust

All relationships are based on trust. Have the discipline and decency to do what is right. Continually ask yourself: "Is this the right thing to do?" Do what you feel is right regardless of peer pressure or personal desires or success.
Do this and confidence will follow.

9 Commit to excellence

Always give the best of your ability. No one can give anymore than that. If you lower your standards you invite mediocrity into your life.
You cannot always do your best but you can always give of your best.

10 Handle with care

Treat others as you would like to be treated: with concern and care

Anyone can follow the 'Ten Commandments' but it is a personal choice.
The only person that you can change is yourself. It is entirely up to you.
The great thing is that we all have the freedom to decide what kind of person we want to be.

Where do we go from here?

Participants took part in an open space session to provide an opportunity to discuss any burning issues that had not been addressed or had arisen during the course of the Retreat. This was followed by a whole group discussion on the theme of future directions for dance and for participants as individuals, exploring possible pathways for getting from here to there.

For the open space session, participants were given a few minutes to think about any issues that they would like to discuss, to write it on a flip chart and lay it on the floor for people to add their name if they wished to talk about the topic. The topics discussed were:

What do we think of our current leaders?

There was some discussion about whether the right people are being chosen as leaders, whether they have the right skills for the job, and whether the jobs are so big it is almost impossible to find the right people. It was thought that there may be too much focus on names rather than ideas and abilities. It was also considered that some current leaders do not recognise the need for change, and that sometimes change was essential for survival. Leaders need to champion dance, to stand above their organisation and look to the future. Too often they are preoccupied with their own organisations, rather than the bigger picture. Some thought that even if they were unhappy with their leaders, the Retreat had enabled them to understand their decisions better. If the participants could hold onto one thing from the Retreat it should be to think about the ways in which they might influence the way their current leaders are leading, and be champions for change from within.

There is a certain style of leadership that is right for an organisation at any given time, as the organisation changes the leadership style has to change. The way we lead in dance could be challenged more. The recruitment of leaders is too often based on artistic factors, and less often on business interests. In the United States the average tenure of an artistic director is 19 years, compared to 3 years for an executive director. Is it possible to judge whether leadership is good or bad? What may work for one person may be difficult for another one. Leaders are people who significantly alter or change the behaviours of other people, they do not necessarily run organisations. Dance is missing the kind of leaders who champion the art form, beyond their own organisation, to government, leaders who will stand up for the art form and provide it with a voice. Dance leaders are often invisible, but the Retreat participants are all potential leaders and they can all be advocates for dance.

What kind of unconventional structures might help team building, staff development and choreography?

Team-building – it was thought important to be creative about ways of building trust, for example through physical work such as blind trust and improvisation. Getting to know people informally was considered really helpful, and complemented formal meetings, examples of informal social contact such as tea and picnics were given. Sharing stories, such as the ones they had shared during the Retreat, could be illuminating and created empathy, inspiration and connection. Open space is a helpful technique, people bond when they share ideas.

Staff and dancers development – project time for personal development requires clear expectations about how personal development can impact on the company, for example by

inviting dancers to submit a short written proposal and a report about what was learned that could be shared with others. There also needs to be a commitment to the company.

Choreography – the group suggested the following examples: Laboratories in larger companies, and not always for public performance as this can inhibit creative risk-taking. Providing creative space, a playground where people can make mistakes. Selected critics being invited to ‘critique’ experiments and work in progress. ‘Springdance’ (Holland) dialogue – ten choreographers together explaining their work to other dance-makers, which helps change thinking as well as practice. Choreographers need to have a chance to ‘sketch’, and different models work for different choreographers. One model developed by Peter Boneham was to work over a month with regular feedback and gradually bring the public in. This had the advantage of engaging audiences in the process behind the project.

With dance moving forward is the ranking system in classical ballet still valid – should we think about changing it or even getting rid of it?

Judgement on ranking should be based on how well you do what you do, for example in the National Ballet of China ranking is fluid and moves in both directions. All organisations have a hierarchy, perhaps scale makes it necessary, but if you shift context, ranking becomes less relevant. Contemporary companies also have a ranking system that is reflected in pay and based on experience and loyalty to the company. The Finnish National Ballet dancers decided to abolish the system in the 1970s and adopted a points system for roles and performances that determined how much they were paid but the new Director is planning to reintroduce the system.

It has to be for the Artistic Director to decide whether and how they operate a ranking system, and vital that it is informed by a clear value system which is communicated and understood.

What are the tools for starting a new creative organisation?

One example described making use of existing structures, such as establishing a charity, where there is a model to follow that brings a certain authority and enables you to apply for city or government funding. It is important to take care with writing the constitution to ensure that it enables you to do everything you want to do. It helps to have a social dimension, such as education, and the other important aspects were creativity and a place to be creative.

An alternative was to adopt a more entrepreneurial, business approach. One example was where a conscious decision had been taken to not seek public money, but first to establish independence and control, propelled by artistic ambition. It was decided not to do education work, and later a charity was established for education work. The relationship between the two companies supports each other.

Looking at models outside dance and the arts can stimulate fresh thinking, some models can be more tax efficient and the situation is different in each country. Mention was made of the idea of a foundation, and of creative organisations such as designers and architects. One participant mentioned the work of some American consultants called Arts Action Research that had helped shape their thinking.

How do you balance yourself as a leader when artistic and administrative duties come together?

How do you build a team that operates steadily and efficiently?

These two questions were taken together, and there was some discussion about whether the second question might be an answer to the first.

Creating a culture is more about changing behaviour than written policies. For example, finding ways to motivate people has more impact on changing behaviour than contracts. How do you create a culture where dancers take responsibility and make creative choices when their expectation is that they will be told what to do? Perhaps by asking questions rather than issuing instructions? The effect of early training can be long-lasting, and catching people during the critical transition from student to professional can shape the rest of their professional lives. Visiting artists can provide alternative role models and have at least a temporary impact. Dancers having experience as creators can also help them understand how it feels to be on the 'other' side of the equation.

There was discussion about leaders who are strong figure-heads, influential and powerful within and beyond the company, and what happens when they leave. Can working more collectively at the top of an organisation help the director to work to their strengths and reduce the negative impact of their departure, make it more possible for their successor to succeed? Doing this would show a great strength in a leader. The notion of building a team seems to be a contemporary way of working, but does absolute power make it impossible to build a team? Leaders have to challenge themselves, approach issues in different ways, and re-invent what success and failure means in the particular context.

The personal cost of leadership was also discussed - the dedication, long hours, the need to nurture your own health and life. Many people in the arts see their work as a vocation more than a job, but this may not be a healthy perspective. There is also a danger that if the leader works long hours and has an unhealthy life-style, it pressurises others to behave in the same way, which can be bad for the culture of the organisation too. Leaders have a responsibility to look after themselves for their own sake, and for the sake of their employees. Having people around that can tell you that you need a break can be helpful.

It was suggested that more balance between work and personal life made people better leaders, it helped them to step back and avoid being overwhelmed by issues. A number of speakers had talked about the value of having a coach and bringing in consultants, and this was endorsed by several participants. The idea of having external people to talk to was seen to help leaders work differently and find a work-life balance. For women, having children remains an issue. Dancers below principal level still find that becoming a mother means the end of their career, and few companies support child care. The choice is often between family and career.

The value of having a long-term plan had resonated with participants. The speed of life, in communications and travel, makes everyone feel hurried, but leaders need to make the time to think and to give themselves time to achieve their ambitions. Leaders need to allow time for the learning process, rather than look for overnight success. But dancers are brought up to seek perfection, they feel the need to be right the first time, and this can make the process of learning especially hard. The experience of the Retreat had been useful in realising the value of slowing down, making time to think or read the paper and create some

distance from the small things that get in the way of the bigger picture – which is where leaders should be focused.

Honesty with staff, for example about the things that are proving difficult, enables them to respond in a more human way and to take more responsibility.

When we leave here, what can we do collectively for dance beyond our own company or organisation?

The value of coming together for the Retreat was noted as a rare and precious opportunity to share ideas, generate new ideas, and be stimulated by each other. While this was valuable for its own sake, the question of continuing the dialogue and the best way of doing it was also posed. There was some concern that such attempts often fail, but that maybe some smaller groups would have more in common and more need for continuing dialogue.

In terms of what the group could do collectively, it was suggested that taking the kind of learning and sharing environment of the Retreat, and seeking ways of recapturing it in their own communities was something everyone could do. They can promote dialogue between existing and emerging leaders, and share personal experience. Changing the language could be a start, for example talking about creativity and not just choreography is about a different mind-set.

Everyone can argue for the need to invest in the careers of artists, to look at ways of developing artists throughout their career and of helping professionalise cultural leadership in dance.

They can also make choices about how they spend their time and energy, to make the time to be a voice for dance. The following day's press conference and reception offered a platform for a collective statement. The first task was to identify the simple messages about the value of dance in contributing to the creativity and well-being of society. The Retreat had been focused on the future and working collectively across cultures and nations, so that should be reflected in the statement. The importance of investing in the careers of artists and their potential to impact of many areas of society should also be part of the argument. Any message needs to be concerned with its audience. As a non-verbal art form, dance has a special role in uniting nations, cultures and ethnicities, but being non-verbal also contributes to its low status. The message to politicians should be about including dance alongside the other art forms when big policy decisions are being made.

The Reception offered an opportunity for the wider world to glimpse something of the Retreat which otherwise would remain internally focused, and would also be announcing the placements for aspiring artistic directors.

There was general discussion about the relationship between dance and politics, including a perception of dance being insular with competing demands, and that this was confusing for politicians. A recent report by Sir Brian McMaster had made the case for excellence, and this could provide a useful connection with the politicians who would be from the UK. The value of the international connections and network was also considered interesting to politicians.

It was acknowledged that the group had a strong voice, and that this was an opportunity to set out a practical action plan for the future. It was agreed that the Retreat had started a

pioneering approach to professionalising leadership in dance, and that international networking, the exchange of ideas, secondments and coaching were all critical to that approach. Was this something special to dance, or had it been done in other art forms? The power of dance for young people and its broad popularity could be a useful connection for politicians, although keeping the message simple and to keep repeating it was most important. Simply saying that dance is important, or that it is a universal language, might be the simple message. The challenge of distilling complex feelings and messages into something compelling and punchy was agreed to be a useful leadership skill.

The group split into small groups, and then created their final statement from the following comments:

- This Rural Retreat has been a multicultural platform for the exchange of ideas in dance leadership. Dance is relevant and present in society globally and we'd like to know what you can do for us and how we can help you in your efforts.
- Dance is a universal language that engages and transforms. We, as a group of international artists, recognise the unique contribution that dance has to make and dedicate ourselves to the continued excellence and creativity of the art form.
- United through our belief that dance is an international language, with no boundaries, no borders, we are all on one path.
- More than ever we recognise the value of dance as the language of our time with the possibility to harness the momentum of new global leadership.
- We are excited about pioneering the renewal and transformation of leadership in dance.
- International exchange, outreach.
- We acknowledge the need to clarify our art form and re-imagine a way forward.
- Impacts of the Retreat:
 - International exchange and networking
 - Value of importing this model locally
- Dance is the unifying language of our times.
- It is in safe hands.

Through further discussion, the following statement was agreed:

Dance is the language of our times. We, as a group of international artists, invite you to recognise with us the enormous contribution that dance has to make and the importance of international exchange in securing its future.

We are excited about pioneering the renewal and transformation of leadership in dance and are dedicated to the pursuit of excellence and creativity of the art form. It is in safe hands.

Finally, everyone wrote a postcard to themselves containing the three actions they were going to take to help their personal leadership development that would be sent to them in a few months time.

Day 4 – 14 January 2008

Reception, Terrace Pavilion, House of Commons, London

The Reception was hosted by the Hon Chris Mole MP for Ipswich with Arts Council England and the East England Development Agency.

The Rt Hon Margaret Hodge MP, Minister for Culture, Creative Industries and Tourism and Peter Hewitt, Chief Executive of Arts Council England spoke, and Tamara Rojo presented the statement on behalf of the Retreat participants.

Assis Carreiro

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen, and thank you Chris and Peter. It is wonderful to see so many of you here today to celebrate the conclusion of this very unique Rural Retreat.

Never before has there been such an international gathering of aspiring dance leaders, but, more importantly, dance artists have never before been asked to put themselves forward as potential leaders. They have been very brave to openly admit that they want to know more about what the 'big job' entails and want to be prepared for when it does come their way.

It has been a truly inspiring weekend. I don't think anyone could have envisioned such a cross section of artists coming together – from a ballerina to an independent contemporary dance artist - they really spanned the gamut and yet they all found common ground. They all possess a fresh, intelligent and outward facing approach; they think outside the box, and they continuously question and challenge to find new ways forward for their art form. This weekend, through listening to each other and to our brilliant guest speakers, they have been given the confidence to take their visions and aspirations forward.

From the clarity of Zoë van Zwanenberg's models of leadership to Alistair Spalding's honest and personal account of how he ensures that risk, innovation and excellence and a creative core can remain at the heart of any organisation, to the passionate dedication of current seasoned artistic directors Frank Andersen (Royal Danish Ballet) and Reid Anderson (Stuttgart Ballet). It has been full-on and all encompassing.

When did we ever dream that the words dance company and football squad would become so interchangeable? Not only did we win a dance convert in Graham Taylor, but he has given us insight into the fine balance between leading and inspiring and being 'the focussed boss' (the job is called the boss in football!).

There is no doubt that training to become an artistic leader cannot start once you are in the big job – and I ask all the funding bodies and dance organisations around the globe to ensure that continuous professional development, particularly in leadership, becomes embedded and that we offer ongoing support and inspiration for not only these leaders in the future but also the next generation.

Press Release: 14 January 2008

Rural Retreat 2008: *Future Leaders and Artistic Directors*

The Outcome...

Westminster, London 14 January 2008: The participants, speakers and organisers of DanceEast's fourth **Rural Retreat** gathered today in the Terrace Pavilion at the House of Commons to share the results of the weekend's intensive think tank with guests, press and various luminaries from the world of dance.

They were welcomed by the Hon **Chris Mole**, MP for Ipswich and addressed by **Peter Hewitt**, Chief Executive of Arts Council England and **The Rt Hon Margaret Hodge MP**, Minister of State in the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

Within the dance profession it has been acknowledged that no-one is every really prepared for what artistic leadership entails. With this Rural Retreat, DanceEast has produced the first intensive programme for future dance leaders. Never before in the art form have future artistic leaders been brought together to discuss and be given insight into the realities of the top job.

Hence, the 2008 Retreat has been structured for those currently in the dance profession who aspire to be future leaders. From a list of 75 applicants, 27 participants representing 12 countries and many nationalities, were chosen to reflect a wide cross-section of men and women of varying cultures, ages, backgrounds and experience in order to facilitate lively debate and maximum input. They included dancers, choreographers and producers plus some very recently appointed artistic directors from as far afield as Australia, China, North America and across Europe.

As well as hearing the inside story from highly experienced artistic directors **Frank Andersen** (Royal Danish Ballet) and **Reid Anderson** (Stuttgart Ballet), the Retreat participants were addressed by **Alistair Spalding**, artistic director and CEO of Sadler's Wells, **Zöe van Zwanenberg**, chief executive of the Scottish Leadership Foundation and **Graham Taylor** OBE, former England football manager. The intensive four-day think tank also included inspirational and provocative talks in break-out groups and with Rural Retreat facilitators **Sue Hoyle** and **Christopher Bannerman**.

Royal Ballet Principal Dancer **Tamara Rojo**, summed up the weekend: *"The art form of dance is not lost and is not adrift. There is vision, there are the people to take it forward, and there are the minds to challenge it, make it relevant to society and to the audiences of this new century. During these four days I had the privilege to share a common passion and see into the future and rejoice in what is coming and the artists that are going to take us there."*

Oregon Ballet Theatre's **Christopher Stowell** added: *"Not only has the Retreat made clear the importance of community and connection within our world, it has also provided us all with access to our generation's most exciting voices."*

DanceEast's Director, **Assis Carreiro** confirmed: *"If this Rural Retreat is anything to go by, the future of dance is in good hands. These last few days have been very inspiring. A new generation of individuals has emerged who are passionate, curious and ready to grasp*

challenges. They are determined to question and challenge old models not just for themselves but for the people they lead. The next generation is not only inwardly resourceful but outwardfacing with a focus on the future.

“There is no doubt that we do the arts - and in particular dance - a disservice by not ensuring that aspiring and existing leaders are given the tools to reach their full potential as visionary leaders. The Retreat was in many ways a reality check on the top job. The participants grasped the opportunity with great humility, honesty and curiosity.

“The dance community globally, must find a way to ensure that such gatherings are not oneoffs. Continuing professional development is integral to the directorial plans of all dance organisations. We cannot expect our dance organisations around the world to find their right leaders without support systems at all levels in their careers.”

Feng Ying, Deputy Director at the National Ballet of China noted: *“As a future leader you have to be a defender of the integrity of this artform, to push a company forward, dig for potential, paint the picture for artistic directions, and be a wise manager, and a patient listener. You should support your staff, be a brave problem solver, and an inspiration for others to do their job better. To be this person is a tremendous challenge and the pressure is daunting. However by building faith and non-stop learning, I believe one can climb up this mountain with growing confidence, courage and a decisive mind.”*

The Retreat was not only an opportunity for debate and theorising. DanceEast is already offering practical opportunities and has secured funding for up to six placements with leading international dance companies to shadow the artistic directors and work with all aspects of a dance organisation (see separate press release).

The fourth DanceEast Rural Retreat was held at Brocket Hall in Hertfordshire, 10-14 January 2008 and was supported by Arts Council England East, The Jerwood Foundation, the Rudolf Nureyev Foundation UK, Harlequin Floors, East of England Development Agency, Freed of London and the Czech Centre (www.czechcentre.org.uk), the Canada Council/Conseil des arts du Canada, The Royal Netherlands Embassy, the Australian Arts Council and the Polish Cultural Institute.

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For group pictures of the Rural Retreat 2008 or pictures of the individual participants please contact Susannah Burke on 01473 295239, susannah@danceeast.co.uk or Debra Boraston as above.

Press release: 14 January 2008

DanceEast leads the way

Placements with major dance companies puts the UK ahead of the game in artistic leadership training

Apprenticeship is a centuries-old tradition and widely regarded as the most effective introduction for any beginner to a new career. In conjunction with DanceEast's fourth Rural Retreat held in January 2008 specifically structured for aspiring artistic leaders of dance, DanceEast has secured placements for up to six of the Retreat participants to shadow artistic directors of major international companies for an intensive three-month period.

David McAllister at The Australian Ballet, **Bruce Sansom** at Central School of Ballet, **Anders Hellstrom** at Nederlands Dans Theater, **David Nixon** at Northern Ballet Theatre, **Monica Mason** at The Royal Ballet, **Janet Smith** at Scottish Dance Theatre, **Helgi Tomasson** at San Francisco Ballet (for 2009), **Reid Anderson** at Stuttgart Ballet and **Tero Saarinen** at Tero Saarinen Company in Finland have all agreed to host a suitable placement and allow them full access to meetings and rehearsals in which they are personally involved.

There will also be opportunity to spend time with other departments in the company such as sponsorship, marketing, PR, backstage and touring to help them fully appreciate the whole range of activities that make up the successful dance organisation over which the artistic director presides. Funding for these placements is sourced from DanceEast and various other trusts and funding bodies. **The Cultural Leadership Programme**, a government-funded investment to promote excellence in leadership across the creative and cultural industries, has contributed £30,000 to fund three of the placements.

Since setting up the first Rural Retreat in 2003, DanceEast Director **Assis Carreiro**, has brought together leading directors from major dance companies and schools from all over the world and the Rural Retreat think tanks have become internationally recognised as an invaluable forum for sharing ideas and discussing the future of dance in the 21st century. The overwhelming number of applications for the 2008 Retreat which is geared towards those considering a leadership role in dance, has convinced her that there are still no clear or structured pathways to artistic leadership: *"One day you are taking curtain calls centre stage and the next you are behind a desk with responsibility for every career within the company – not to mention artistic vision and some fundraising! Whilst we cannot give them all the skills in one weekend, we can highlight the responsibilities of the job and the skills they will require in addition to their own creativity and individual personalities. With these placements we can also help actually put the theories into practice for some of them with inspiring world dance leaders."*

Carreiro, along with fellow Rural Retreat facilitators Christopher Bannerman and Sue Hoyle, will select the successful apprentices after the Rural Retreat and match them with a hosting company as well as negotiate the three-month plan to ensure maximum benefit and learning experience. When all the placements have been fulfilled, DanceEast will recall all six participants for a mini Rural Retreat to share their experiences and will help forward the development of their own leadership careers.

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Notes to Editors:

DanceEast is the national dance organisation for the East of England. As well as the internationally recognised Rural Retreat programme, DanceEast works regionally, bringing acclaimed dance performances from international dance companies to the East of England and runs an extensive programme of dance classes and training in Suffolk. DanceEast will open its new £8.5 million DanceHouse on the Ipswich waterfront next year, one of the biggest arts capital projects in the region.

The Cultural Leadership Programme is being delivered by three strategic partners: Arts Council England; Creative & Cultural Skills (Sector Skills Council) and the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council. For further information visit www.culturalleadership.org.uk.

DanceEast's Rural Retreats – a brief history

In January 2003, DanceEast hosted the first 'Rural Retreat: Ballet into the 21st Century'. It was the largest ever gathering of heads of international ballet companies and was held in Suffolk, England. Twenty-five directors from around the world attended the Retreat and concluded this unique three-day think tank in agreement that certain issues were of concern to all companies and could most effectively be addressed through working together as an informal network of directors committed to the development and future of ballet.

In January 2005, twenty-six directors from across four continents came together for DanceEast's second Rural Retreat, this time in Hertfordshire, England. The international peer group recognised that the art form of ballet is evolving beyond stereotypical images of ballet, and that high quality training of professional dancers is essential to the future of both companies and the art form.

The impetus for DanceEast's third Rural Retreat was sparked by discussions that took place over the previous two Retreats. It became obvious that many of the issues currently facing ballet companies needed to be shared with the professional schools and institutions responsible for training young people for careers with the companies. It is in the foundations of training that new directions for ballet can be seeded. International ballet companies and professional training schools needed to address these issues together.

Following the Rural Retreat in January 2005, and the Prix de Lausanne later that month, the artistic President of the Prix de Lausanne, Mavis Staines, and one of the Artistic Committee members, Deborah Bull, approached DanceEast to discuss working together. The third Rural Retreat, 'Nurturing the 21st Century Dancer', took place in Vevey, Switzerland in January 2006, immediately following the Prix de Lausanne 2006. It brought together 32 Directors of professional ballet / dance schools and companies from around the globe. The results of this Retreat included the creation of directors' website www.balletdancenetwork.com a website for the public dissemination of information and issues by the partner dance companies and schools as well as a private forum for directors to maintain regular dialogue.

In January 2008, DanceEast hosted its fourth Rural Retreat, for future leaders and artistic directors. It was the first time that such an initiative had invited dance artists to identify their leadership aspirations and desire to be prepared for assuming leadership in dance. The opportunity for placements with the current leaders of six international dance companies was announced at the end of this Retreat.

All about DanceEast....

Based in the East of England, **DanceEast** is one of the nation's leading dance organisations

- **DanceEast** brings world-class dance to the East of England, working in partnership with venues throughout the region. Past programmes include Sylvie Guillem & Russell Maliphant, Akram Khan, George Piper Dances, Bonachela Dance Company, Wayne McGregor | Random Dance, Rambert Dance Company, Mark Morris Dance Group and many other internationally renowned dance artists. DanceEast presents an eclectic programme of dance performance of different genres, widening the experience of existing audiences whilst bringing a new and invigorated audience to dance.
- **DanceEast** takes dance to villages and communities with no access to dance performance through an annual rural tour, bringing acclaimed dancers and imaginative theatre experiences to new and young audiences, backed up with an extensive educational programme. These programmes aim to inspire and enthral with exciting, high quality experiences.
- **DanceEast** works with regional dance artists, bringing established choreographers and renowned dance companies to support their professional development. Encouraging new talent and emerging artists, providing a framework of training, support and performance opportunities, is integral to the work of DanceEast.
Wayne McGregor | Random Dance is DanceEast's Associate Dance Company and Bonachela Dance Company and Maresa Von Stockert are also Associates.
- **DanceEast** produces the internationally recognised Rural Retreats, think-tanks looking at the future of the art form with leaders in the world of dance and ballet. Rural Retreats is creating a forum for ongoing discussion on the future of dance.
- **DanceEast** promotes dance with a variety of community dance classes, workshops and short courses, open to all. DanceEast aims to bring the opportunity to dance to everyone across East Anglia, and to promote dance as a pastime for fun and fitness for everybody. DanceEast co-ordinates a range of youth dance companies in Suffolk, bringing emerging and talented new dancers professional choreographers and expert tuition as well as opportunities to perform at national and regional platforms. From break dance to ballet, DanceEast brings out the potential of our young dancers and give them a chance to develop their talents.
- **DanceEast** works with schools, offering a variety of after-school activities and developing the extended schools agenda and takes professional dance workshops into schools and runs special schools workshops and performances. DanceEast also works with looked after children and children at risk, as well as children in hospitals, bringing them the opportunity to use

dance for creative expression and physical and psychological therapy, through expert tuition and support.

- **DanceEast** works with businesses and health education authorities in the region to promote dance as health and fitness, bringing weekly classes into the workplace, in a dynamic 'fit for work' initiative. DanceEast aims to bridge the gap between art and industry and to encourage local businesses to take part and to take pride in the Eastern region's incredible reputation for arts and a great place to live and work.
- **DanceEast** manages the DanceEast Academy, a government-funded regional Centre for Advanced Training for dance. The DanceEast Academy is part of a nationwide strategy to devolve centres of excellence in the regions. The Academy aims to bring outstanding opportunities for exceptional young people to develop their potential before beginning careers as professional dancers.
- **DanceEast's** new home, the £8.6 million Jerwood DanceHouse on Ipswich's waterfront, is due to open in Autumn 2009. The Jerwood DanceHouse will be the cultural hub of re-vamped waterfront. This will be a regional hothouse for the development and presentation of new and emerging talent, housing three dance studios, a 200-seat studio theatre, fitness suite, café and dancewear shop. The Jerwood DanceHouse will give unrivalled access to dance opportunities, from performance through to participation for the whole community.

Invitation to attend Rural Retreat 2008 (circulated 2 January 2007)

Future Directors and Creative Producers for Ballet and Dance

DanceEast is one of England's leading dance organisations. Since 2002, DanceEast has been producing the internationally respected Rural Retreats. These think tanks have been bringing together leaders from the world of ballet and dance to look at key issues facing in the art form and how we move forward into the 21st century. These Retreats have been the first global opportunity for Directors to come together with their peers to share their issues and concerns in an environment that is conducive to openly discuss and debate in a rural setting.

DanceEast's next Rural Retreat will take place 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 January 2008 at Brocket Hall in Hertfordshire, England. Brocket Hall is 22 miles from central London and is easily accessible by air, rail or road. The Retreat will commence on Thursday 10th January and conclude at 10am on Monday 14th January.

This next Retreat is especially for individuals who aspire to direct a Ballet or Contemporary Dance Company, particularly middle to large scale. It will be restricted to 26 individuals from around the globe and is by invitation only. The aim is not to be retrospective but rather to look at what a future company will look like and who its leaders will be.

This is an intensive 3-day think tank that is facilitated by two professionals and we will also have guest speakers from the worlds of the arts and business. Prior to attending the Retreat, you will be interviewed and asked to complete a questionnaire to ensure that your issues and concerns are addressed at the Retreat. DanceEast will cover the cost of accommodation and meals but we do ask that participants and/or their companies cover their own travel costs if at all possible.

If you would like to be considered to attend the Rural Retreat for Future Directors and Creative Producers, please send an email or postal letter explaining why you would like to attend together with your CV to DanceEast no later than 26 January 2007. This will be treated in the strictest confidence. If you are selected to attend the Retreat, Dance East will contact your director to discuss freeing you up for these specific days if required.

You can nominate an individual or nominate yourself. We really would like to have a strong international mix of male and female future leaders at this Retreat who represent a diverse mix of backgrounds, not necessarily ballet or dance and who believe they can make an impact on the future of the art form as a leader. Please don't be shy about putting yourself forward. This is a unique opportunity to find out more about what leadership really is all about and a wonderful opportunity to network with future leaders from around the globe.

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Press Release Date: 19 March 2007

DANCEEAST: RURAL RETREAT 2008 – ‘FUTURE LEADERS’ PARTICIPANTS CONFIRMED

The dance world’s artistic directors and creative producers of the future are the focus of DanceEast’s fourth Rural Retreat to be held in January 2008 (10-14th) at Brocket Hall in Hertfordshire. From a list of 70 applicants, 26 aspiring leaders from around the globe have been selected for an intensive four-day think-tank of inspirational and provocative talks and discussions about the realities and challenges of the artistic director’s job in the 21st century.

The successful participants come from a diverse and highly international range of dance practitioners from four continents including Europe (Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Holland, Poland, Spain and the UK), Australia, North America and Asia. While successful dancers and choreographers are very familiar with performing all over the world and adapting to foreign cultures, a leadership role has to embrace the additional dimensions of programming, funding and policy issues which have a direct bearing on creative ambitions. Hence a mix of very different cultures was essential in the selection process.

The 2008 Rural Retreat is structured for would-be directors of mid-to large-scale ballet and contemporary dance companies. Several of the participants already have some experience of smaller scale leadership having formed their own companies: **Daniel Gwartzman** who founded the Daniel Gwartzman Dance Company in New York in 1998 and choreographer **Cathy Marston** who formed her own company very recently (The Cathy Marston Project) and actually has the ‘big role’ looming in the near future when she takes on directorship of Switzerland’s Bern Ballet later this year.

Others have evolved into shared positions of leadership in companies which have nurtured their entire performing careers, such as **Feng Ying**, deputy director of the National Ballet of China and Tamas Detrich now ballet master and associate director of Stuttgart Ballet. Some have already taken on leadership – but quite recently - of small companies, including **Michael Trent**, artistic director of Toronto-based Dancemakers and The Centre for Creation since August 06, Christopher **Stowell**, artistic director of Oregon Ballet Theatre since 2003 and **Jeff Edwards**, associate artistic director of Washington Ballet, also since 2003.

Some have moved on from dancing and already forged diverse careers in other creative orbits of dance, such as **Farooq Chaudhry** who has produced **Akram Khan**’s projects for the last seven years, and **Sharon Watson** and **Kenneth Tharp**, both of whom are also currently fellows of the UK’s Clore Leadership Programme which aims to help train and develop a new generation of leaders in the arts in the UK.

Dancers such as English National Ballet’s **Thomas Edur**, The National Ballet of Canada’s Artist in Residence **Rex Harrington**, ex-Nederlands Dans Theatre’s **Václav Kuneš** (now working as a freelance dancer and choreographer), Cullberg Ballet’s **Tilman O’Donnell** (soon to join the Forsyth Dance Company), Royal Ballet principal **Tamara Rojo**, Finnish National Ballet’s **Minna Tervamäki**, and, until recently, Rambert’s **Ana Luján Sánchez** are now pushing open

doors to explore possible new futures in the dance world, while others have already made an impact as teachers and répétiteurs - Ballet de Lorraine's **Christophe Béranger** and **Otto Neubert**, ballet master at Pacific Northwest Ballet following a dancing career at New York City Ballet. Combining careers as dancers, choreographers and producers are the Royal Ballet's **Will Tuckett** and **Ernst Meisner** and Poland's **Karol Urbański**. Making up the final numbers are established choreographers **André Gingras** and Australia's **Natalie Weir** and **Adrian Burnett**, and performer and choreographer **Marc Brew**.

The selection deliberately reflects a wide cross-section of men and women of varying cultures, ages, backgrounds and experience in order to facilitate lively debate and maximum input.

From the outset DanceEast's Rural Retreats have focused very clearly on the challenges facing the development of the art form in the 21st century and have attracted the highest calibre of dance professionals from the very start (84 directors from 19 nations at three Retreats to date). While many of the 2008 participants have already pursued administrative courses and made forays into production and direction, there is no specific training for the top artistic job. How does one gain hands-on experience of diplomacy, balancing budgets, wooing sponsors, marketing, promotion & media representation, managing talent (and sometimes fragile egos), programme planning, audience satisfaction etc before plunging into the role? Which is the right route to take and what are the qualities required? The Rural Retreat will provide a totally confidential environment in which to explore the critical issues facing the art form as well as help them assess their own suitability for the job.

In addition to group workshops, there will be key speakers on leadership including Sadler's Wells' artistic director **Alistair Spalding**, **Frank Andersen**, now in his 22nd consecutive year as an artistic director (Royal Danish Ballet since 1984 apart from a four year interlude in the late '90s when he directed the Royal Swedish Ballet) and **Reid Anderson** who made the cultural transition from his native Canada to Europe where he has been artistic director of Stuttgart Ballet for 11 years. Two other luminaries from the worlds of sport and business will also attend the Retreat as guest speakers (to be announced shortly).

The 2008 Rural Retreat is supported by Arts Council England East, The Jerwood Charitable Foundation, the Rudolf Nureyev Foundation UK, Harlequin Floors and Freed of London.

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Notes to Editors:

The Steering Group (responsible for developing the concepts of the Retreat and the selection process): Assis Carreiro (DanceEast), Cynthia Harvey (ex Principal Dancer, The Royal Ballet/American Ballet Theatre), Bruce Sansom (Director, Central School of Ballet), Deborah Bull (Creative Director ROH2), Roanne Dods (Director, Jerwood Charitable Foundation), David Nixon (Artistic Director, Northern Ballet Theatre), Jeanette Siddall (freelance consultant), Prof. Christopher Bannerman (RESCEN, Middlesex University), Sue Hoyle (Deputy Director, Clore Leadership Programme), Alistair Spalding (Artistic Director, Sadler's Wells).

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Press Release Date: 18 September 2007

TWO HIGH PROFILE SPEAKERS CONFIRMED FOR 2008 RURAL RETREAT LEADERSHIP FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE...FOOTBALL TO THE NHS

For the DanceEast Rural Retreat 2008, which puts the spotlight on those who aspire to be the artistic directors of dance in the future, organiser Assis Carreiro has invited two high-powered leaders to address the participants and spend time at the group discussions: former England football manager, Graham Taylor OBE and chief executive of the Scottish Leadership Foundation, Zoë van Zwanenberg. Effective, powerful leadership is a skill fuelled and tested by constant challenge and ever-changing circumstances in any walk of life and these two have certainly proved their skills and determination in careers that have seen challenging top-level appointments in the full glare of public interest and criticism.

Graham Taylor OBE began his football management career at the age of 28 as the country's youngest ever manager having been forced to retire from playing due to injury. His colourful managerial career spanned 36 years, more than 1,000 league games and encompassed all the English professional divisions. Boss of Lincoln, Watford, Aston Villa and Wolves – as well as England 1990-93 – he finally retired in 2003 and is currently a pundit for BBC Radio 5 Live. Watford (chairman Sir Elton John) was his greatest success: the Division Four club achieved a meteoric rise to the First Division and the FA cup final in just five years under his leadership. The years as England boss were more fraught and decisions which resulted in losing some crunch games and failure to qualify for the 1994 World Cup brought vilification in the English press. Despite this, he remains a popular and respected figure throughout the game and was awarded the OBE in the 2001 for his services to football.

Zoë van Zwanenberg began her career in public service in the NHS where she rose to posts of Director of Personnel and Training for a new Community Unit and the head of the new Strategic Change Unit at the NHS in Scotland. Between these health service appointments she spent several years managing human resources for InterCity during the rail privatisation process and closing down of the InterCity HQ. As Director of Human Resources for Anglia Railways she prepared them for franchise before moving to the Environment Agency, England and Wales in a consultancy role involved with a complex merger and restructuring process. The Scottish Leadership Foundation, where she has been chief executive since 2001, is an independent membership-based company dedicated to the development of leaders and leadership across all public services in Scotland. Dance is not entirely outside her realm as she trained at the Arts Educational School, was Chair of Scottish Youth Dance for six years (still a board member) and is also Chair of the Board of Scottish Ballet.

The other speakers at the Retreat are Sadler's Wells' artistic director Alistair Spalding, Frank Andersen, now in his 20th consecutive year as an artistic director (Royal Danish Ballet since 1984 apart from a four year interlude in the late '90s when he directed the Royal Swedish Ballet) and Reid Anderson who made the cultural transition from his native Canada to Europe where he has been artistic director of Stuttgart Ballet for 11 years.

A NEW PARTICIPANT

Another aspiring director has joined the list of participants in the Rural Retreat: **Branislav Henselmann**, currently Artistic Curator at New York City Ballet, New York Choreographic Institute. He trained in Germany where he also began his career as a dancer before moving to New York where, as well being a dancer and rehearsal director, he also furthered his studies at the Merce Cunningham Foundation, The George Balanchine Trust and New York University where he gained an MA in Fine Arts in dance and Business Administration.

The fourth Rural Retreat will be held 10-14 January 2008 at Brocket Hall in Hertfordshire, England and provides a totally confidential environment in which to explore the critical issues facing the art form as well as the personal challenges entailed in a directorship role. The 27 participants reflect a wide cross-section of men and women of varying cultures, ages, background and experience in order to facilitate lively debate and maximum input.

The 2008 Rural Retreat is supported by Arts Council England East, The Jerwood Foundation, the Rudolf Nureyev Foundation UK, Harlequin Floors and Freed of London and the embassies of the Czech Republic, Poland, the Netherlands and France, the Australian Council for the Arts and the Canada Council.

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Biographies of participants

Adrian Burnett (Australia) developed as a choreographer while scaling the ranks of professional dancing, primarily with The Australian Ballet, for whom he became resident choreographer in 2003. Other companies for whom he has choreographed included Houston Ballet, Dutch National Ballet, and New York City Ballet Choreographic Institute.

Marc Brew (Australia/UK) trained at The Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School and the Australian Ballet School before joining the Australian Ballet, South African Ballet Company and Infinity Dance Theatre (NY). He has worked internationally as a dancer, choreographer, teacher and director. A car accident in 1997 left him paralysed from the chest down but has not deterred Marc from continuing his dancing. For the last three years he has been working with the UK's CandoCo Company.

Farooq Chaudhry (Pakistan/UK) has worked in a variety of dance media including contemporary dance, opera, film, pop videos, pop tours, and musical theatre. In 1999 he formed an association with Akram Khan with whom he founded the Akram Khan Company in August 2000. He continues to work with Akram Khan as his producer and is currently a Project Champion for the Clore Leadership programme.

Tamas Detrich's (Germany/USA) distinguished 25-year dancing career has been entirely with Stuttgart Ballet which he joined after graduating. He retired from the stage in 2002 and became the company's full-time ballet master and was appointed artistic associate of the company in 2004.

Sylvie Dhuyetter (France) has been associate artistic director of Maison des Compagnies et des Spectacles at the Centre National de la Danse in Paris since 2001. A graduate of the Conservatoire de Paris, she went on to perform with Roland Petit's Ballet National de Marseille and Ballet de Lyon and later turned to administration and production with a number of leading organizations in France.

Thomas Edur (Estonia/British citizen since 2000) has enjoyed a 16-year association with English National Ballet (ENB) as leading principal and is guest artist with many international companies. He has a celebrated partnership with his wife Agnes Oaks. As an award-winning dancer, teacher and choreographer he fulfils a lifelong commitment to promoting excellence in dance and has been a patron of the British Ballet Organisation since 2004.

Jeff Edwards (USA) became associate artistic director of the Washington Ballet in 2003. His dancing career spanned Europe and the US, most notably with New York City Ballet (1984-93). He has been a répétiteur for the George Balanchine Trust since 2001, director of Education for Twyla Tharp Dance (2001-3) and was also a Management Fellow (2002-3) at the prestigious Kennedy Center Institute for Arts Management.

André Gingras (The Netherlands). After an extensive career in dance and theatre, André began to choreograph in 1999, revealing a highly physical and visual personal language that finds inspiration in martial arts, breakdance, the physical symptoms related to specific medical conditions and in post-modern dance and theatre. Working with directors such as Robert Wilson and Peter Stein and choreographing for companies such as Nederlands Dans Theatre and, most recently, Rambert Dance Company he has developed his ability to engage dance with other multi-media arts as well as contemporary issues.

Daniel Gwartzman (USA) Choreographer Daniel Gwartzman danced with Mark Morris Dance Group and Garth Fagan Dance before founding Daniel Gwartzman Dance Company in 1998 as a performing and teaching company. He is committed to teaching and increasing the accessibility of dance, and the teaching arm of his company has taught over 7000 public school children, parents and administrators and he has also helped develop the Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in the Arts, the new NYC arts curriculum.

Rex Harrington (Canada) was with the National Ballet of Canada 1983– 2004 (15 of which were as principal dancer), dancing and creating major roles in the repertoire as well as guesting around the world and partnering numerous ballerinas including Carla Fracci, Karen Kain, Susan Jaffe, Ekaterina Maximova and, most famously, Evelyn Hart. In 2000 he was appointed an Officer of the Order of Canada in recognition of his achievement in dance. Today he is associate artist with the company.

Branislav Henselmann (USA/Germany) began his performing career in Germany before moving to New York in 2003 where he danced with various companies including Johannes Wieland and Heather Harrington dance companies. Recently Branislav attained an MA in Fine Arts, Dance and Business Administration at New York University and is currently Artistic Curator for the New York Ballet /Choreographic Institute at New York City Ballet.

Sampo Kivelä (Finland) has just retired from the stage having danced with Finnish National Ballet since 1984. He is currently working as a producer with the Finnish National Opera Ballet School and has also worked as a director, choreographer, répétiteur and actor.

Václav Kuneš (Czech Republic), trained in his native Czech Republic, Vaclav danced with Nederlands Dans 1 & 2 since 1993, and more recently has been working freelance as a dancer, teacher and choreographer with, among others, Copenhagen International Ballet, Saburo Teshigawara and staging re-works of Jiří Kylián.

Cathy Marston (UK) has led a successful career as a choreographer alongside that of a dancer from the outset. Her early career in the '90s as a dancer with Switzerland's three ballet companies in Zurich, Luzern and Bern was followed by a freelance career in the UK. She has created works for most of the UK's major ballet companies and was the Royal Opera House's first Artistic Associate (2002-6). She recently launched her own company, The Cathy Marston Project, and became artistic director of Bern Ballet in August 2007.

Ernst Meisner's (UK/Holland) Born in Holland, Ernst received a scholarship to the Royal Ballet School which led directly to a contract with the Royal Ballet in 2000 becoming a First Artist in 2002. He choreographed for First Drafts in the Clore Studio at The Royal Opera House – something he has done every year since. In 2005, at the age of just 23, he produced and directed his own show, BalletMoves, with dancers from the Royal and Kirov Ballets. In January 2007 he produced and directed a two-day workshop in Kent involving students of dance, design and stage management.

Otto Neubert (Germany/USA) began his performance career in his native Germany with Stuttgart Ballet and later joined New York City Ballet as a soloist. Since 1992 he has been ballet master for Pacific Northwest Ballet where he has worked closely with the artistic directors on many aspects of the company's profile and development.

Tilman O'Donnell (USA) graduated in 2000 from Canada's National Ballet School and is currently performing with The Forsyth Company following four years dancing with the Cullberg Ballet. As well as dancing, he has also choreographs.

Tamara Rojo (Spain/UK) began her dancing career at the age of 16 with the Victor Ullate Dance Centre in Madrid, moving to the UK at the age of 20. She is a highly acclaimed principal dancer with the Royal Ballet, which she joined in 2000 following three years with English National Ballet, and is a guest artist with The Tokyo Ballet, La Scala Ballet, Ballet Nacional de Cuba and English National Ballet.

Ana Luján Sánchez's (UK/Spain) career as a dancer has been almost exclusively with Rambert Dance Company (1996-2006), during which time she also ventured into choreography and teaching. Since leaving she has embarked on a coaching course, guested in Spain and the UK as rehearsal director and teacher with, among others, Phoenix Dance Theatre and assisted with a Spanish tour for Rambert Dance Company. She is currently Rehearsal Director for Phoenix Dance Theatre.

Christopher Stowell (USA) became artistic director of Oregon Ballet Theatre in 2003 following a dancing career with San Francisco Ballet which he combined with teaching and choreographing for many of the leading American companies. He has also acted as consultant, speaker and panelist for various national dance events and organizations.

Kenneth Tharp's (UK) main affiliations as a dancer have been with London Contemporary Dance Theatre (1981-1994) and Arc Dance Company (1994-2005). He has also worked extensively as a choreographer, teacher and director combining dance with many different media. With composer Simon Redfern he is co-director of Artyfartyarts, a multi disciplinary arts group, as well as being on the Board of Trustees at the Royal Opera House. He has been a fellow on the Clore Leadership Programme, and was appointed the chief executive of The Place, London's premier centre for contemporary dance, in September 2007.

Michael Trent (Canada) has achieved national recognition as a choreographer, dancer, teacher and producer and was appointed artistic director and resident choreographer of Dancemakers and the Centre for Creation in Toronto in 2006. He has a close association with Toronto Dance Theatre having danced with them for many years and been a senior member of the school faculty for the last ten years.

Will Tuckett (UK) is a choreographer, dancer and director of theatre, opera and film. Trained at the Royal Ballet School, he was a member of the Royal Ballet from 1990 – 2005 working as a choreographer and dancer. He is now a principal guest artist. He has choreographed extensively for both the Royal Ballet and ROH2 and created more than twenty ballets for The Royal Ballet, Sadler’s Wells and Birmingham Royal Ballet.

Karol Urbański’s (Poland) performance career has included the National Ballet in Warsaw and the Norwegian National Ballet. He has also been involved in choreography and teaching of both ballet and contemporary dance and in 2006 co-founded the Centre for Contemporary Dance Foundation in Warsaw.

Sharon Watson (UK). Since leaving Phoenix Dance Company in 1998 Sharon has pursued an active career as a choreographer, producer, lecturer, teacher, rehearsal director and tour director and is currently a fellow of the Clore Leadership Programme.

Natalie Weir (Australia), has been choreographing professionally for more than 20 years, she has created over 100 works for most of Australia’s contemporary and classical ballet companies as well as for overseas companies including American Ballet Theatre, Houston Ballet and Hong Kong Ballet. She has also been the recipient of an Australia Council Fellowship towards her development as an Artistic Director.

Feng Ying’s (China) entire professional career has been with the National Ballet of China, as a leading dancer from 1980-96 and as ballet mistress and répétiteur until 2004 when she was appointed deputy director. She has performed and staged many of the great classics of the ballet repertoire.

Biographies of facilitators and speakers

Christopher Bannerman - Head of ResCen, the Centre for Research into Creation in the Performing Arts at Middlesex University – Facilitator

Christopher Bannerman began his career in dance in Canada where he danced with The National Ballet of Canada. Deciding to pursue his interest in South Asian art forms and culture, he left the company and travelled extensively in South Asia. On returning to the west he came to London where he retrained at the London Contemporary Dance School.

Bannerman danced and choreographed for a number of companies both in Britain and internationally before joining the London Contemporary Dance Theatre where, for fifteen years, he performed numerous principal roles, was active as an arts education worker and choreographed many works. He performed throughout the world including at the Olympic Arts Festivals at both the Los Angeles and the Seoul Olympics.

In 1989 he became Head of School of Dance at Middlesex University and in November 1992 he received the title of Professor of Dance. His Inaugural Lecture contained sections of live dance, one of which he performed himself.

He has served as a judge for the Digital Dance Awards, the Prudential Awards for the Arts and the Olivier Awards, as a panel member on the Drama, Dance and Performing Arts Panel for the Higher Education Research Assessment Exercise and as a Specialist Assessor for the Quality Assurance Agency.

He has served as Chair of Dance UK, the National Dance Coordinating Committee, the Arts Council of England Dance Panel, as a member of the Trustee's Committee of Akademi as well as an Adviser to the London Arts Board.

In 2001 he choreographed a quartet section of the South Asian Dance celebration Coming of Age at London's South Bank Centre and also returned to the stage in a duet with South Asian dancer Mavin Khoo in Cast in Stone?

Bannerman is now Programme Leader for the MA Choreography and Head of ResCen, the Centre for Research into Creation in the Performing Arts at Middlesex University. This reflects his deep interest in the creative powers of artists and the ways in which these qualities link and intersect the art forms. In addition, he currently serves as a member of the Dance Forum of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

Sue Hoyle - Deputy Director, The Clore Leadership Programme - Facilitator

Sue Hoyle is Deputy Director of the Clore Leadership Programme, an initiative to train and develop future leaders in the cultural sector. Hoyle began her career as a university lecturer and tutor in adult education before joining London Festival Ballet (now English National Ballet), initially in the press and marketing department before becoming the company's first Education Officer. She was Manager of Extemporary Dance Theatre for three years and then joined the Arts Council as Dance and Mime Officer. She was promoted to Director of Dance and in 1994 to Deputy Secretary-General. Sue left the Arts Council in 1997 to become Head

of Arts for the British Council in Paris. From 1998 to 2003 she was Executive Director of The Place, London's international centre for contemporary dance.

Hoyle is Lead Adviser for Dance for Arts Council England, chairs the Board of DV8 Physical Theatre, is a founding Board member of Create KX (a creative development agency for the regeneration of King's Cross) and a Patron of the Foundation for Community Dance. She has previously been on the boards of the London Philharmonic Orchestra, Ricochet Dance Productions and Shobana Jeyasingh Dance Company. As a consultant, she has advised a range of UK and overseas institutions, including the Hong Kong Arts Development Council, and is the co-author of a comparative study on funding for culture in France and Britain.

Frank Andersen – Artistic Director, Royal Danish Ballet – Guest Speaker

Commander of the Dannebrog Order, Frank Andersen was born in 1953 and trained at the Ballet School of the Royal Theatre. He became apprentice in 1969 and dancer in the Royal Danish Ballet in 1971, where he was appointed principal dancer in 1977. Artistic Director of the Royal Danish Ballet from 1985 to 1994 Artistic Director of the Royal Swedish Ballet from 1995 to 1999 Artistic Director of the Royal Danish Ballet from summer 2002

Solo performances at Hamburg Opera House, Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, England, Belgium, Switzerland, Japan, Italy, Mexico and USA. Originator of the Bournonville Group with principals of the Royal Danish Ballet 1976, touring with the group in the USA, Canada, Scandinavia, Central America, France, Italy, Israel, West Germany, Sweden, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Thailand, Finland, Holland, Italy, France, Hong Kong, Malaysia and Denmark.

Director of several August Bournonville Ballet productions: Napoli (act III) for the Monte Carlo Ballet, 1988 A Folktale for the Royal Danish Ballet, 1991 (with set and costumes by her Majesty Queen Margrethe II) Napoli for the Royal Danish Ballet, 1992 La Sylphide for the Inoue Ballet, 1999 La Sylphide for the National Ballet of China, 1999 La Sylphide for the Royal Swedish Ballet, 1999 Napoli (act III) for the Repertory Company ABT, 2001 La Ventana for The Royal Danish Ballet in 2005 Napoli for Finland National Ballet in 2005 Napoli (act III) for the INOUE Ballet in 2005 Conservatory, Flower festival in Genzano and Jockey dance for the National Ballet of Georgia in Tbilisi in 2006 La Sylphide for the National Ballet of Estonia 2007 Napoli (act III) for the National Ballet of Cuba in 2007 La Sylphide for the Maggio Dance Company in Florence, Italy in 2007

Director of the Bournonville Summer Academy, 1985-92 Originator of the Copenhagen Culture Week, 1981 Director of the record company Delphina Member of the board of Minister of Cultural Affairs Niels Mathiesen's Memorial Foundation from 1980, President from 1993 Member of the board for Danish American National Cultural Exchange from 1983 Member of the board for Neel Resling Halpern foundation from 1998 President of the jury, Prix de Lausanne ballet competition, 1990 Artistic Director for Nina Ananiashvili and International Stars, from 1993 Artistic Advisor for the Inoue Ballet, Japan, from 1995-2002 Artistic Advisor for the National Ballet of China, from 1997-2002 Chairman of the Board, New Danish Dance Theatre, from 2001-2002 Member of the board for Danish-Swedish Culture foundation from 2002 Member of the Artistic Committee for New York Choreographic Institute from 2002 Artistic advisor for New York International Ballet Competition, from 2002

Esther og Harald Holst Prize of Honor, 1994. Swedish-Danish Culture Prize, 1997. Danish-Swedish Culture Prize, 1999. Carina Ari Foundation Gold medal, 1999. The Berlingske

Foundation Prize of Honor, 2000. The Dance Magazine Award, 2002. The Vibeke Rørvig Ballet Grant, 2002. Margot Lander's Grant of Honour, 2003. Man of the Year, 2004, Danish-American Society. The Royal Medal of Recompense, 2005. Premio Galileo, 2006.

Reid Anderson - Artistic Director, Stuttgart Ballet, Germany – Guest Speaker

Artistic Director of the Stuttgart Ballet since September 1996, Reid Anderson has had a long and distinguished career in the world of dance as a dancer, teacher, coach, producer and artistic director.

At the age of 19, Reid Anderson joined the Stuttgart Ballet as a dancer at the invitation of the choreographer and director John Cranko. Throughout his 17 year career with the Stuttgart Ballet, Anderson, who became a soloist in 1974 and a principal dancer in 1978, worked with some of the leading choreographers of the 20th century, including John Cranko, Sir Kenneth MacMillan, Glen Tetley, John Neumeier, Jirí Kylián and William Forsythe.

In 1987 Anderson became Artistic Director of Ballet British Columbia. In July 1989, Anderson was appointed Artistic Director of the National Ballet of Canada, a position which he held until 1996, when he returned to the Stuttgart Ballet as Artistic Director. In his first season he rejuvenated the company adding 21 new dancers, prompting the renowned dance critic Horst Koegler to write "Today's Stuttgart Ballet is the best Stuttgart Ballet of the last thirty-five years."

Artistic Director for more than a decade now, Anderson has not only continued to write the Stuttgart Ballet's success story, he has also earned a reputation for the successful fostering of young talent, both with regard to the artistic evolution of the company as well as spotting choreographic ability. Since 1996 he has commissioned and witnessed the successful world premieres of more than 50 new choreographies, many of them by emerging choreographers of the younger generation. Among those, who have created works for the Stuttgart Ballet are Mauro Bigonzetti, David Bintley, Itzik Galili, Marco Goecke (resident choreographer since 2005), Wayne McGregor, Maximiliano Guerra, Matjash Mrozewski, Kevin O'Day, Uwe Scholz and Christian Spuck (resident choreographer since 2001). Anderson has also enriched the company's repertoire through the acquisition of ballets from internationally renowned masters such as George Balanchine, William Forsythe, Frederick Ashton, Jerome Robbins and Hans van Manen.

In addition to his duties as Artistic Director, Anderson has staged the works of John Cranko around the world since 1984 for companies such as the Royal Ballet, the Royal Danish Ballet, the Ballet of the Teatro alla Scala in Milan, the Australian Ballet, the Deutsche Staatsoper in Berlin, the Hamburg Ballett, Teatro de Colon in Buenos Aires, Boston Ballet, Rome Opera Ballet, the Norwegian National Ballet and the National Ballet of China.

In February 2006 Reid Anderson was awarded the German Dance Prize 2006 in appreciation of his significant contribution to the development of classical dance in Germany. In the same year he was named "Director of the Year" by the readers of the renowned dance magazine DANCE EUROPE.

Alistair Spalding – Chief Executive and Artistic Director, Sadler's Wells – Guest Speaker

Alistair Spalding is the Chief Executive and Artistic Director of Sadler's Wells Theatre and Chairman of Dance UK. He has been responsible for the programming at Sadler's Wells Theatre since February 2000 and has presented companies such as Netherlands Dance Theatre 1 and 2, Dutch National Ballet, the National Ballet of China, Martha Graham Dance

Company, Mark Morris Dance Group, Michael Clark, Ballett Frankfurt, Pina Bausch, Alvin Ailey, New Adventures and Ballet C de La B over that time. He has also initiated projects such as the Breakin' Convention Hip Hop Festival as well as inviting Random Dance Company as the theatre's Resident Company. In March 2004 he announced a new commissioning and co-producing policy at Sadler's Wells and has since appointed Matthew Bourne, Jonzi D, Sylvie Guillem, Akram Khan, Russell Maliphant, Wayne McGregor, the Ballet Boyz and Jasmine Vardimon as associate artists at the theatre

Over six years between 1994 and 2000 Alistair Spalding was the Head of Dance and Performance at the South Bank Centre in London where he developed both the presentation and commissioning of national and international dance and performance companies. As well as increasing the number of performances and audience attendance for dance at the centre he developed strong co-producing relationships with a number of national and international companies and artists including DV8, Alain Platel, Jonathan Burrows, Javier de Frutos and Rosas Dance Company. The South Bank Centre won the Time Out award for best dance production in both 1998 for Alain Platel and in 1999 for the New York Ballet Stars project.

He was a member of the Arts Council of England Dance advisory panel between 1995 and 2003 and he is an external advisor on the City University Validation Board for the Laban Centre London degree courses. He was awarded Le Chevalier des Artes et Lettres by the French Embassy in October 2005.

Graham Taylor OBE – former England Football Manager and Radio 5 Live Football – Guest Speaker

Graham Taylor grew up in Scunthorpe, the son of a sports journalist and began his football career with Grimsby Town in 1962. He transferred to Lincoln City in the summer of 1968 but at the age of 28 he became the country's youngest ever manager having been forced to retire from playing due to injury.

His colourful managerial career spanned 36 years, more than 1,000 league games and encompassed all the English professional divisions. Boss of Lincoln, Watford, Aston Villa and Wolves – as well as England 1990-93 – he finally retired in 2003 and is currently a pundit for BBC Radio 5 Live.

Watford (chairman Sir Elton John) was his greatest success: the Division Four club achieved a meteoric rise to the First Division and the FA cup final in just five years under his leadership.

The years as England boss were more fraught and decisions which resulted in losing some crunch games and failure to qualify for the 1994 World Cup brought vilification in the English press. Despite this, he remains a popular and respected figure throughout the game and was awarded the OBE in the 2001 for his services to football.

Zoë van Zwanenberg - Chief Executive, Scottish Leadership Foundation – Guest Speaker

Zoë was raised in Ipswich, Suffolk and initially trained as a dancer at Arts Educational School, Tring. She began her career in public service in the NHS, starting as an outpatient receptionist to move through a range of management posts to Deputy General Manager at a large District General Hospital She then decided to specialise in Human Resources and people development, taking up the role of Force Personnel Officer for a shire Police Force before returning to the NHS as Director of Personnel and Training for a new Community Unit

Zoë left health again to join the InterCity business as Management and Employee Development Manager. During the rail privatisation process she led the HR team handling the people issues involved in closing down the InterCity HQ and setting up the new passenger train companies. She was then appointed as Director of HR for Anglia Railways, helping them to prepare for Franchise and the move into the private sector. Zoë then moved to the Environment Agency, England and Wales, as their Organisation and Management Development Advisor, working through the issues involved in a complex merger and restructuring process.

After 7 years away from health, Zoë returned to the NHS in Scotland to head up the new Strategic Change Unit, focusing on organisation and executive development and the development of partnership working. In August 2000, Zoë was seconded to the Scottish Executive to set-up the new Scottish Leadership Foundation – an independent, membership-based company dedicated to the development of leaders and leadership across all public services in Scotland. April 2001 saw Zoë take up the permanent appointment as Chief Executive of the Foundation.

Assis Carreiro – Director, DanceEast

Assis Carreiro joined DanceEast as Director in January 2000 and has led the organisation through a period of redevelopment and expansion. She has initiated **Rural Retreats**, a series of international think tanks looking at key issues facing the dance profession, and **Snape Dances** an international dance series at Snape Maltings. Under her direction, DanceEast has pioneered an annual rural touring programme throughout East Anglia and a series of curated evenings of dance. DanceEast is currently developing its largest ever project, a £8.6 million new DanceHouse, the cultural cornerstone of the largest urban regeneration project in the East of England on the Ipswich waterfront scheduled for completion in Autumn 2009.

During 1998/99 Assis was dance programmer at DasTAT in Germany for William Forsythe's Ballett Frankfurt. From 1994 through 1996, Assis was founding director of **DanceXchange**, the National Dance Agency in Birmingham and went on to work for Wayne McGregor|Random Dance and as Fund Raising Executive at The Place where she produced **Cut+Thrust**, a fund raising dance event at the Saatchi Gallery. Prior to moving to the UK in 1994, Assis was Director of Education, Community Outreach and Publications for the National Ballet of Canada for 12 years where she led the first education unit in a Canadian dance company and launched **Creating Dances in the Schools, Stepping Out** residencies and produced a number of educational videos and resource packs, including **Ballet Notes**.

Assis was born in the Azores and raised in Canada. She studied dance for many years and holds a BA (Honours) from Canada's York University and an MA (Distinction) from Surrey University in Guildford. She has taught and lectured in England, Canada, Norway, Germany and the USA and has been on the Board of Directors of Dance UK, Dance 4, Dancemakers, the Jonathan Burrows Group and the Arts & Business East Regional Advisory Council. Assis is currently on the Dance Task Group for Arts Council England, the Association of National Dance Agencies, and is a member of Les Reperages dance platform in Lille, France. She has served on the jury for the Jerwood Awards for Dance (1997, 1998, 2003), the Dora Mavor Moore Awards, and the Banc d'Essai French Platform. She has been an advisor and assessor to the Arts Council of England's Arts for Everyone Lottery Grants, London Arts Board, Ontario Arts Council, the Canada Council and Scottish Executive. She recently served on Sir Brian McMaster's Sounding Board Review for Supporting Excellence in the Arts: From Measurement to Judgement.

In 2003, the International Theatre Council nominated Assis for the International Dance Award and in 2006 was awarded an Honorary Doctorate in Civil Law from the University of East Anglia (Suffolk College).

Press Cuttings

Graham Taylor: Do I not like that?

Daily Telegraph 12/01/2008

Former England football boss Graham Taylor tells Lyndsey Winship why he will be addressing a gathering of the international dance elite

Russian composer Dmitri Shostakovich may have called football "the ballet of the masses", but former England manager Graham Taylor was never known for his grace on the pitch. Yet he has completely, unexpectedly, fallen for dance.

This weekend sees a gathering of the international dance elite, as aspiring artistic directors take part in DanceEast's annual rural retreat in Hertfordshire. It's a chance to compare notes and debate the state of the art, but as dancers and choreographers mingle, Taylor will be an unlikely figure in their midst.

During his time in football's toughest job, Taylor would often find sanctuary in the theatre. "It was the one thing that could get football out of my mind for a couple of hours," he says. Dance, though, was always off the radar.

When DanceEast director Assis Carreiro invited 63-year-old Taylor (who now works as a Telegraph columnist, radio pundit and serves as a vice-president of Scunthorpe United) to give a talk at the retreat, he thought it would just be a case of turning up and saying his piece. Carreiro, though, had other ideas. She sent him on a three-month crash course in ballet and contemporary dance, and Taylor blossomed into an unlikely dance aficionado.

He was thrown in at the deep end: sent to watch a piece about incest and murder performed by disabled/able-bodied dance group CandoCo, which he thought was "first class". That was followed by visits to Rambert Dance Company and Birmingham Royal Ballet, a day watching rehearsals and a trip to Elmhurst School for Dance in Edgbaston, Birmingham.

Best of the lot was watching Carlos Acosta and Tamara Rojo in the Royal Ballet's acclaimed production of Romeo and Juliet.

"If you want to know what passionate, unbridled love is about, watch these two dance," says Taylor. "I'm not saying I cried, but my wife was sat next to me and I thought, oh God, I wish I could dance like that."

When Taylor gets to Hertfordshire, he should be able to find some common ground with his audience. Artistic directors tend to be former dancers or choreographers who find themselves suddenly facing the unfamiliar demands of staff, boards, finances, press and public, often with no previous management experience.

"In 1972 I was one of 24 players at Lincoln City," says Taylor. "The manager was sacked and seven days later I was the manger of 23 players. So I can relate."

"Being a manager can be a very lonely job. You've got to believe in yourself. We didn't win a game in my first 11 matches at Lincoln. I well remember the call of about 3,000 people: 'Taylor, out! Taylor, out!'"

By the time he reached the World Cup qualifiers with England in 1993 there were 70,000 people repeating the same chant. That's one ignominy an artistic director will never face, but there are still plenty of similarities between the two worlds.

The high level of fitness required of dancers and footballers is the obvious parallel: both are elite athletes who train intensively from a young age to work in a fiercely competitive arena, and their careers can be ended at any time by injury.

"I would say dancers probably train harder than pro footballers," Taylor says.

"It's probably harder to become a leading ballerina or principal man than it is to become an England player."

He has also noticed that, as with many Premiership squads, British dancers are in the minority in the country's top companies, and he thinks there are a few things the two worlds could learn from each other.

Taylor was disappointed by the lack of facilities in place in even the top echelons of ballet, to look after the dancers' health and nutrition, compared with what he's used to in the moneyed world of football. But he was more than impressed by the attitudes of many of the dancers he met.

"The discipline was absolutely excellent," he says. "What I think the dancer has over and above the footballer is a dedication to practice."

It's the dancers' devotion to technique, their readiness to repeat a single move again and again until it's right, that has wowed Taylor. It's all about attitude.

"I haven't seen anybody throw a moody and walk off," he adds. "I haven't seen a dancer disagree with the instructor and tell him he doesn't know what he's talking about - you can see that on the football pitch."

"Footballers grumble about how much they work, and we play at most twice a week. These people perform sometimes twice a day," he says. And they earn in a year what a so-so Premiership player earns in a week.

"Now I think footballers could learn something from that."