

To: Lisa Ullmann Travelling Scholarship Fund

4th January 2006

Please find enclosed my end of award report to the Lisa Ullmann Travelling Scholarship Fund; I do apologise that I am sending this past the two-month deadline.

The Fund's generous grant of £800 supported my travel costs to Seattle, USA where I completed the first summer of the Skinner Releasing Technique™ (SRT) Teaching Certification Programme at the University of Washington, 18th July – 26th August 2005. As detailed in my report, the experience met and far exceeded my aims for the summer.

Below are some unexpected outcomes, which stand out as highlights:

- Whilst immersed in the technique and away from my daily life, I was afforded the space to devise and plan the London Skinner Releasing Easter School 2006, with my colleague Gaby Agis who was in Seattle teaching on the Annual SRT Summer Intensive.
- Similarly as above, being in the creative environment of the summer, I was inspired to write an article about the performance application of 'awareness of spaces' cultivated in Skinner Releasing for the American dance journal, Contact Quarterly. I also collaborated with SRT teacher Sally Metcalf on the submission of her article 'My Place is in Process' to the same publication.
- I meet a local dance producer who has offered to produce my solo, *My Father's Grace*, in Seattle next summer.
- I was introduced to the Bessie-award winning, New York dance artist Jennifer Monson. The result of this meeting is that Jennifer will come to London in April 2006 to teach on the London Skinner Releasing Easter School 2006 at the Siobhan Davies Studios: London's landmark new space for dance.

My plans to share my learning and what I have gained include:

- the biennial London Skinner Releasing Easter Schools
- creating a new SRT evening class in London
- the Breathing Space: dance-in-health programme
- and training and working with psychotherapists.

In addition, I have re-designed the Falling Wide website to be the central information point for SRT in Britain and have secured dedicated UK-SRT listing pages on skinnerreleasing.com and londondance.com. I have also been invited to write an article on Skinner Releasing Technique for londondance.com to increase awareness and further disseminate information about the technique, particularly for those who are not familiar with the approach.

My advice to future Awardees would be to take as much time as possible for their travel, and to really strive to prioritise their travel project in terms how much time and space they afford it. Being away for six weeks was an incredible experience – opening space for reflection, renewal and rejuvenation.

I have not included an attendance certificate for the course, since I will not receive this until I complete the programme next summer. However, I am more than happy to send a copy of this at that time.

My sincere thanks once again for this invaluable support; I have appreciated it greatly and do hope to be able to make a difference in the dance and wider communities here in London and the UK as a result of the Fund's support.

With all best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

Joe Moran

End of award report to the Lisa Ullmann Travelling Scholarship Fund by Joe Moran

Skinner Releasing Technique™ Teaching Certification Programme

Project Description

The £800 grant that was generously awarded to me by the Lisa Ullmann Travelling Scholarship Fund funded by return travel to Seattle, USA to undertake the first six-weeks of the Skinner Releasing Technique™ (SRT) Teacher Certification Programme: 18th July – 26th August 2005.

"Skinner Releasing is a dance technique that has the same objectives as other concert dance techniques: alignment, flexibility, strength, speed, dynamic range, musicality and control of nuance. This technique, however, is a system of kinaesthetic training that refines the perception and performance of movement ... The teaching of this technique is complex, and requires specialist skills. The training to be certified to teach is rigorous. Only 10-12 people are accepted at one time into the training program."

Joan Skinner, from 'Skinner Releasing Technique™ Syllabus for Teacher Certification Programme', May 2005

The summer was taught by the SRT teacher certification faculty: Joan Skinner, Sally Metcalf, Theresa Moriarty and Stephanie Skura, and included daily classes in SRT at the introductory and intermediate levels, daily training seminars and lectures, discussions, voice work and music studies, alongside weekly essay assignments. In addition, the training group observed the morning classes of the Annual SRT Summer Intensive during the last three weeks.

Having successfully completed the first year, I have been accepted onto the second year of the training programme that will be take place over a second six-week period in Jul/Aug 2006, again in Seattle.

Benefits and Outcomes

I gained immeasurable from the summer. Firstly, I am very pleased to have begun the process of training as a Releasing teacher and thereby creating a strong foundation for my teaching and community practice. I feel I have gained a significantly deeper understanding and appreciation of the practice of Skinner Releasing, whilst also deepened in my own releasing experience, as a dance artist, in unexpected and profound ways. The most explicit benefit of the summer has been successfully completing the first year of the training programme. I will complete the training next summer and will then be 'certified to teach the fifteen two-hour classes, which comprise the Introductory level material of SRT (SRT covers Intermediate and Advanced levels as well)'. ^[1]

- Upon certification, I plan to teach as part of the faculty of the biennial London Skinner Releasing Easter School that I organise for the independent arts charity, Falling Wide, which I run with Gaby Agis – our work has established London as Europe's leading international training centre for SRT.
- In Sept 2006, I will create a new, weekly evening class in SRT to address the current lack of evening class provision. This will be offered in partnership with a London dance organisation and will target community participants, alongside dancers, performers and artists.
- Teachers in training are not permitted to teach SRT prior to their certification, yet we are encouraged to reflect deeply on the principles of the practice and integrate these, where appropriate, into our existing work. In Spring 2006, I will embark upon leading a three-month programme of creative movement workshops for those living with HIV & Aids as part of Falling Wide's Breathing Space: dance-in-health programme, funded by the National Lottery through the Awards for All scheme. This work will be highly informed by Skinner Releasing and the first part of my training that was supported by the LUTSF.

The training has had an immediate influence on my choreographic work. Daily SRT classes over the six weeks and weekly assignments - that included of topics on Releasing principles such as the integration of technical skill and creative growth, Releasing Alignment and the nature of process - offered me an opportunity for reflection and inward attention, which, by contrast, has propelling dramatic unfoldment in my choreographic work. The training clarified and affirmed my current choreographic investigation, increased my confidence as an artist and developed my skills in working with dancers.

- In Feb 2006, I will present my new work *Oh Abraham*, a group work for four dancers created in collaboration with filmmakers Jane Barnwell & Roberto Napolitano, at The Place: Robin Howard Dance Theatre as part of the *Resolution!* season.
- In addition, I am developing the solo *My Father's Grace* for performance at a London gallery later this year, and I am collaborating with London dance artists Florence Peake and Kirstie Richardson on the durational live-art performance, *Shift/Construct*. Over the summer, I also conceived ways to apply Skinner Releasing Technique to my practice as a psychotherapist. These include:
- Training psychotherapists and therapists of other disciplines in Skinner Releasing as a way to cultivate 'embodied intuition': a skill that is essential in the training and practice of psychotherapy.
- A practice-based research project into *Releasing, Embodiment and Psychotherapy*, that will be make up part of my eventual PhD research.

Unexpected Outcomes

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Sharing and Dissemination

I will disseminate my learning and what I have gained through:

- the biennial London Skinner Releasing Easter Schools
- creating a new SRT evening class in London
- the Breathing Space: dance-in-health programme
- training and working with psychotherapists

In addition, I have re-designed the Falling Wide website to be the central information point for SRT in Britain and have secured dedicated UK-SRT listing pages on skinnerreleasing.com and londondance.com. I have also been invited to write an article on Skinner Releasing Technique for londondance.com to increase awareness and further disseminate information about the technique, particularly for those who are not familiar with the approach.

Once again thank you very much to the Lisa Ullmann Travelling Scholarship Fund and its committee for this generous assistance – it has been greatly appreciated.

Joe Moran
London, Dec 2005

[1] Joan Skinner, '*Skinner Releasing Technique™ Syllabus for Teacher Certification Programme*', May 2005