

COVERING LETTER

Dear LUTSF,

Thank you for the generous support towards my travel to be part of the London Professional Feldenkrais Method Training during last year. Between April and December 2012 the scholarship paid for six return train journeys from Newcastle upon Tyne to London Kings cross. The purpose of the project was achieved as this money supported me in attending three intensive training segments (April, August, November 2012) as well as three additional visits to workshops and study group meetings.

The positive effect of developing my learning in this direction has been strongly felt during this time already through an increasingly more confident use of elements of the Feldenkrais Method and specifically Awareness Through Movement lessons in my own teaching as well as through the general ethos and experiential influence of the work.

The Scholarship this year significantly supported my involvement with the training and the learning will be shared throughout my work and wider contact with the people I collaborate with as an independent artist.

Please find below the report with more detail.
Best wishes and, again, many thanks.

Yours sincerely,

Fiona Wright

March 2013

Lisa Ullmann Travelling Scholarship Fund

LUTSF REPORT

Travel to London for Feldenkrais Method Training

I am a freelance choreographer, dancer and teacher, working through performance since the late 1980s and, for the last twelve years, I have been based mainly in Newcastle upon Tyne. A long term plan is now being realised as I am enrolled in the new London Feldenkrais Method Professional Training Programme (2011-2015) which will qualify me to teach group and individual lessons. Like most other International training programmes, this professional training takes place in three intensive segments, meeting each year across four years. During this part of the training in 2012 (the end of first year and beginning of second year) I needed to travel regularly from my base in Newcastle upon Tyne to the sessions in London and the generous contribution from LUTSF has greatly supported the cost of this schedule at this time. Since this project period for the travel fund I have now

moved to be based in London, mainly in order to position myself nearer the training and my teachers for this important study towards new developments in my work.

At the age of 47 I'm undertaking this self-funded re-training as part of a transition in terms of how I earn my living and as well as a transformation of my creative life. Between April and December 2012 the scholarship paid for six return train journeys from Newcastle upon Tyne to London Kings cross, supporting my attendance at the intensive training as well as additional visits to workshops and study group meetings. The training will qualify me to teach group classes in Awareness Through Movement (ATM) after the second year and, later after the end of the fourth year, the hands-on individual Functional Integration lessons (FI). I began the training while I was living in Newcastle upon Tyne and the assistance from LUTSF made all the difference to make possible a full engagement in the visits that I made during that period.

Despite being freelance, self-employed and with very few savings, the launch of this London-based training was a great opportunity which I felt I must seize because this is an excellent team of practitioners whom I very much want to work alongside. I have been fortunate to do a work/study placement on the training allowing me to have a partly reduced fee in exchange working to support the organisation and running of the training. This and the LUTSF grant encouraged me to take the leap of faith to aim to finance the four years.

One of London's most respected teachers Scott Clark organises and assists with the training; the Educational Director is the California-based trainer, Elizabeth Berringer with whom I had specifically wanted to work; and one of the Assistant Trainers is my own teacher, Shelagh O'Neill.

www.feldenkraislondon.com

This opportunity has come at a time when I am seeking new independent sources of income to develop alongside my work as an established artist, mentor and teacher. I have been a student of the Feldenkrais Method myself since before 1990 and it has been the most important influence on me in terms of my everyday movement, my movement research as a performer and choreographer and also in my own teaching practice in studios and seminars, with groups and through individual tutorials and mentoring.

Along with various somatic practices and areas of experiential anatomy the Method can offer many benefits, routes towards an individual learning process, less effort and more efficient and functional movement. The sense of the nervous system and the imagination are both increasingly vital in my ideas about our integration of learning and re-learning. The focus here is really on the Awareness - with the intention to cultivate a deeper understanding of how the quality, rather than the execution of the movement as such, is the key aspect. Movement is the context yet not simply the objective.

My own teaching practice, has become increasingly influenced the Feldenkrais Method, especially in terms of elements of the Awareness Through Movement lessons. As a qualified practitioner I will be seeking ways to use the class form (ATM) and the one-to-one (FI) lessons as a resource alongside my other freelance work.

One example of how the training is influencing and supporting my work is as part of the A/Void project, a workshop series I have been developing with Caroline Bowditch. It was supported by Arts Council England in the North East and designed by Caroline and myself (as *girl jonah*) with additional support from Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art. The main focus during 2012 has been a series of creative meetings with small groups of artists from different backgrounds who were seeking to reflect on research and process and production.

girljonah.blogspot.co.uk

girl jonah is an ongoing collaboration known for duet performances and choreographic investigations as disabled and non-disabled performers working together since 2004. Without necessarily being named as an 'integrated' dance project, they endeavor to use the work to raise the visibility of disabled artists.

www.girljonah.org

This access to travel funding from the LUTSF has been a substantial contribution to my investment in studying for a new qualification which will enrich and enhance the development of my practice in many ways.

Fiona Wright

fionawright.org

thepresent-fionawright.blogspot.co.uk