

January 2012

Dear Sir/Madam

I have enclosed paper and CD copies of my scholarship report for my trip to the west coast of the USA which took place from 16.11.11-6.12.11. This three week trip allowed me to travel through San Francisco, where I watched two evening programs of dance. Los Angeles, the birthplace of Locking and Popping, where I met Suga Pop and Sweepy and learnt a phenomenal amount about the funk styles. Last but not least, Las Vegas, this was where I trained with pioneer Scoo B Doo (Jimmy Foster) who taught me a lot about the historical context and approaches to Locking. I learnt more than I could have ever imagined from this trip! The experience was truly mind blowing and has inspired me to further my individual development throughout the UK by building new networks and creating more opportunities for myself and my students. I wish to continue networking with the people I connected with throughout the trip and open future pathways to perhaps bring them to Wales.

I have already written a mini web blog about the trip for the community arts company I work for and acknowledged The Lisa Ullmann Fund for supporting this amazing experience. You can view this at <http://www.valleyandvalecommunityarts.co.uk/2012/01/dance-development-in-the-usa/>

A HUGE thank you to The Lisa Ullmann Travelling Scholarship Fund for supporting this once in a life time opportunity! The funky fever has taken over me and I can honestly say that since my return from the west coast I have been successful with creating a variety of performance opportunities for my students and most importantly I have upcoming opportunities in the pipeline for my own development as a performer....my experience in the USA really built my confidence as a 'dancer' not just a teacher.

Thank you to all who support the Lisa Ullman Travelling Scholarship Fund for making this happen!

Kind Regards

Issie Lloyd

Dance Development Worker/Teacher

Valley and Vale Community Arts, Rubicon Dance Studios, Cardiff City Council

## REPORT

### My Trip To Funky Town

In 2011 I was lucky enough to receive a travelling scholarship from the Lisa Ullmann Travelling Scholarship Fund to support a dance trip to the west coast of USA. One of my close dancing friends, Dave, accompanied me on these travels which meant I had somebody as passionate as I about these styles to share the experience with. The trip started in San Francisco where we watched two separate programmes of the San Francisco Hip Hop Dance Fest. This is an annual event which hosts opportunities for local and international acts within the hip hop genre to perform. It was a fantastic event, bringing new and fresh dance material to the stage. UK based group Plague performed there, so it was nice to see familiar faces and have dancers representing the UK. There was a whole variety of acts presenting styles such as animation, popping, locking, breaking, waacking, voguing, hip hop and contemporary influences. The acts involved in the event were: Meech Onomo Company (Paris, France), Neopolitan (Oakland), SoulForce Dance Company (San Francisco), Academy Of Villains (San Mateo), Outer Circle Crew (Los Angeles), Compagnie Arts de Scene (Valenciennes, France), Strictly Business (Bay Area), Groove Against the Machine (Bay Area), Gee's Disciples (Santa Rosa), Robot Boys (Denmark), Mind Over Matter (San Francisco), Plague (London), FBC (San Francisco), Loose Change (San Francisco), Soul Sector (San Francisco), FootworKINGz (Chicago), Chapkis Dance (Vallejo), Decadancetheatre (NYC), Antics (Los Angeles). San Francisco Hip Hop Dance Fest was refreshing to say the least!

I then moved onto LA, the birthplace of Locking and Popping. I had the privilege of training with Suga Pop (who I have trained with in the UK previously through the support of Arts Council of Wales). I was also lucky enough to meet Sweepy, one of the funkiest, creative and passionate poppers I have ever met! Both Suga Pop and Sweepy trained with some of the original pioneers of Locking and Popping and have individually developed these styles throughout their generation. Pop and Sweepy were so inspirational, always thinking outside of the box and showing me how much variety can be involved within these dances. I spent most of my time just gawping at how ridiculously funky they were and listening to their stories of how the styles grew to be so popular throughout their generation. I took advantage of my time on the west coast and participated in some Capoeira classes also, which is a Brazilian art form I am very passionate about. I met some lovely teachers and groups who were very welcoming and taught me many new approaches to the movement and music of Capoeira.



Prior to the evening dance classes, Dave and I would head down to the LA beaches and spend the day training our own variations of the funk styles. We would take some of what we had learnt along the trip so far and combine this with our own variations of funk social dances and layers of technique. These were some of my most magical moments, dancing like crazy to the sounds of the sea and bright blue sky without a care in the world. It was a perfect opportunity for me to develop my individual creativity without the pressure of time and work. It was great to share the experience with Dave who is an incredibly motivated and creative individual. Our practice pushed me to new limits and certainly increased my confidence as a dancer.

My last stop in the USA was in Las Vegas to train with the one and only Scoo B Doo, one of the original pioneers of Locking. He showed me his original approach to Locking and how to individually develop and layer the style. Scoo B also brought Sundance (an old school Locker) to the class to deliver some feedback and skills. The session seemed so surreal, standing in a room with Scoo B Doo, one of the original pioneers of Locking who I had heard so much about and seen so many clips of on soul train! I was lucky enough to be awarded a certificate from Scoo B Doo for participating in a private class and training in his original techniques of Locking. A true privilege seeing as he is only doing this for the first 1000 people he teaches privately- I was number 325!!

Throughout this west coast trip I have been able to explore the cities, the dance styles, the teachers' approaches to the styles and most importantly, create a new network with all these wonderful people!



I have achieved a high quality of work from this experience. With the knowledge, technique and networks I have gained I can not only pass this onto my students but hopefully bring these pioneers and other teachers to South Wales to deliver workshops in the future. I feel that my understanding of the funk styles has developed hugely and I have strengthened as a dancer. This is a huge leap for me as it is often difficult being a teacher to gain enough spare time to train and increase my technique rapidly. If anything this experience has encouraged me to focus more on my individual dance training and take up more opportunities when given the chance. I am lucky enough to have very supportive work colleagues to enable me to do this. So far I have loved adapting my teaching structure and playing with the creative process and techniques I learnt with my students. I wish to continue my professional development on a monthly basis and hopefully get more opportunities for me to develop as an individual, not just a teacher. Everything I have learnt, everyone I have met, everything I have been influenced by will be passed onto my students, which will slowly but surely enhance the development of the funk scene throughout South Wales. A social dance night will be my next aim, something I have tried once before in Cardiff which was a huge success. The Lisa Ullmann Travelling Scholarship has enabled me to create secure networks with some of the most influential dancers throughout the history of Locking and Popping. The more support I can get through these recent networks, the more dance opportunities I can offer to South Wales.

A HUGE thank you to the Lisa Ullmann Fund for supporting this dance opportunity and big thank you to Valley and Vale Community Arts for allowing me to have this time off to develop on my individual training and to learn more about the styles I teach by experiencing the funk styles REAL historical path.

Issie Lloyd