Fringe Festival Success for Lancashire Charity

Wednesday 13 September, 2017

Media:

















Local charity DanceSyndrome is celebrating after two successful performances at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival.

DanceSyndrome is a multi-award winning dance charity, based in Lancashire, that delivers inclusive dance workshops and dance leadership training as well as inspiring performances that demonstrate a focus on ability rather than disability. The charity was founded by dancer Jen Blackwell, who happens to have Down's syndrome, because she found it difficult to find opportunities in community dance due to her disability. DanceSyndrome's ethos is that disability should never be a barrier to following your dreams.

Jen's dream has always been to travel the world with her dance team and she firmly believes that everyone should "Dream. Believe. Achieve." The idea of taking the team to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival became a reality after a successful local tour in 2016 gave the team the confidence to follow their dreams of performing on an international stage.

In 2016, DanceSyndrome secured Arts Council England funding to develop a performance piece called "Orbit" which was so well received by audiences that it was decided to raise funds to take the show to the Fringe. The charity ran a successful fundraising campaign, starting in March this year, to help to cover the costs of the trip. With the help of sponsorship from local business StormMeister Flood Protection, they managed to raise enough money to cover the costs of taking 13 dancers and their support to Edinburgh to perform at the festival.

"Orbit" was performed on Monday 14th and Tuesday 15th August at popular Edinburgh venue The Space at Surgeons Hall and the venue was almost full for both shows. A performance at such a well respected and well attended event is an amazing achievement for DanceSyndrome. Performance is a vital way for the dancers to communicate key messages about inclusion, teamwork and achievement, as well as challenging audience perceptions about people with learning disabilities.

DanceSyndrome Managing Director, Dawn Vickers, said "We are so proud of the passion, energy and ability displayed by our incredible group of dancers. The trip to Edinburgh was a dream come true for the performers who have overcome many personal barriers to achieve their potential. The feedback from the audience has been amazing and it proves that ability is much more significant than disability! This has been a huge achievement for the dancers who are excited to see what new opportunities are around the next corner!"

Dancer Becky Rich was incredibly proud of the team's performance and the success of the whole trip. She said "We love performing together and bringing joy and happiness to people. I want to help [the dancers] to fulfil their dreams of travelling around the world dancing in different countries and educating people about acceptance and to end discrimination once and for all. We have lots of fun together in everything we do. We're having the time of our lives. I am very thankful and grateful."

"We were very touched by the positive response that we received when handing out our flyers on the Royal Mile to promote our show. Also we had fantastic audiences on both days which made it really special for us as performers and we think we really connected with the audiences in a special way. We all had a very special and fun time in Edinburgh. Thank you to everyone who supported us and helped us to get to Edinburgh"

For more information about DanceSyndrome, please visit www.dancesyndrome.co.uk.

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For more information about DanceSyndrome, please contact Sarah Calderbank, Business Development and Administration Executive on 07597 942494 or email sarah@dancesyndrome.co.uk

www.dancesyndrome.co.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/dancerleddisabilityinspired

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DanceSyndrome was established in 2009 by Founder and Creative Director Jen Blackwell. Jen has Down's syndrome and wanted to follow her dream of being a dancer and Dance Leader. The DanceSyndrome ethos is that everyone has the right to follow their own interests and passions, whether they have a disability or not. DanceSyndrome offer dance leadership opportunities to people with learning disabilities and empower them to co-lead high quality inclusive dance workshops which are delivered to disabled and non-disabled participants across the North West.

The hard work and innovative approach of DanceSyndrome Founder and Creative Director Jen Blackwell was recognised when she was chosen as the winner of the Inspirational Woman of the Year award at the Enterprise Vision Awards in September 2015.

DanceSyndrome's Dance Leader Team were recognised at a national level winning the Sporting Chance Award at The National Learning Disability and Autism Awards in July 2016.

DanceSyndrome was recognised as Not-for-profit of the Year at the Red Rose Awards 2017.

DanceSyndrome are funded by Spirit of 2012 and Big Lottery funding.

The Edinburgh Fringe Festival is the largest arts festival in the world and takes place every August for three weeks. The festival caters for everyone, from big name entertainers to emerging performers, and covers all sorts of art forms such as theatre, comedy, children’s shows, dance, physical theatre, musicals, operas, all genres of music, exhibitions, street performers and events.





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