Triumphant Return to Fringe Festival for Lancashire Charity

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Media:

















Accrington based charity DanceSyndrome is celebrating after a series of 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. Dancers with and without disabilities work together to inspire people to see what can be achieved when we all become more inclusive.

In 2017, DanceSyndrome ran a successful fundraising campaign and managed to raise enough money to cover the costs of taking 13 dancers and their support to Edinburgh to perform two shows at the prestigious Fringe festival. The dancers were all thrilled by the response they received and were determined to return in 2018.

They wanted to improve on 2017, so a second fundraising campaign was launched, this time to cover costs of 16 dancers, performing 3 shows and an outdoor dance activity on Edinburgh's famous Royal Mile. The campaign was a success, with many dancers and volunteers taking part in personal challenges to raise money and awareness of the charity. The success of the campaign, which had a target of £10,000 meant that the dream to return to Edinburgh became a reality. A brand new show was developed and choreographed exclusively by DanceSyndrome's dancers. The show, named "Lit aDrift", incorporates light into the choreography, which tells the story of one man's path as he tries to find his place in the world. The lead role was performed by 20 year old David Corr, from Chorley (pictured).

"Lit aDrift" was performed on Thursday 16th, Friday 17th and Saturday 18th August at popular Edinburgh venue The Space at Surgeons Hall and the venue was full for all three 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.

This is where DanceSyndrome really triumphed at this year's festival. The audience response to the show was incredible, with several audience members describing it as the best show they saw at the Fringe.

"Think I might just have seen my favourite show of the Fringe"

"Hauntingly beautiful performances by a talented company of an uplifting story of loss, love and life which is relevant to all. Fantastic!"

"Stunning, immensely moving, the most beautiful piece of theatre I've seen this year at Edinburgh Fringe"

"Having just watched DanceSyndrome perform “Lit aDrift” I can say I have never seen a better example of equality by default. Truly moved by their performance and the organisations vision."

"Please don't ever stop creating the magic!"

DanceSyndrome Patron, Julie Ward MEP tweeted "Thanks DanceSyndrome for making me feel so proud. Your hauntingly beautiful show Lit a Drift pushed all my emotional buttons. The quality of the company’s work just gets better & better."

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!"

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



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