

Annette Walker Tap Programme - Changing Times Tap Initiative Report, May 2023

The *Annette Walker Tap Programme* has been able to deliver tap workshops and apprenticeships to its young adult Tap Ambassadors and students with the support of the *Changing Times Tap Initiative* grant.

Abbreviations

TA - Tap Ambassadors of the Annette Walker Tap Dance Programme

TP - Tap (Dance) Programme

JDE - Jazz Dance Elite, Lindy Hop dance company founded by Jreena Green

Classes and workshops

Studio update

The *Coin Street Centre Trust* has continued to offer studio space at Colombo Centre in London, as originally organised by Jreena Green of *Jazz Dance Elite* (JDE) dance company since August 2021. Colombo Centre changed its main sports hall flooring over the summer period July-Sept 2022.

Weekly classes

The Tap Programme (TP) weekly, 2 hour, adult community tap classes resumed in Oct 2022 and ran until Dec 2022, offering a subsidised rate for JDE students and free training for Tap Ambassadors (TA).

For the block of classes from 23 Oct to 11 Dec 2023, a free after class “Tap Hang” was offered on demand and ran twice with a sharing of Annette’s tap footage and in-depth discussions.

Archived event:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/annette-walkers-tap-dance-programme-oct-dec-2022-tickets-406433342067>

Reschedule

In January 2023, the Colombo Centre abruptly stopped all tap activities on the new floor which cancelled the weekly classes and interrupted the planned schedule of Tap Programme activities. The Coin Street Trust continued to support both JDE and TA activities. A flooring solution has been sought to resume weekly tap classes at the Colombo Centre after summer 2023. TP activities were rescheduled to be delivered with adjustments to the budget to cover costs for an alternative studio.

Rhythm Tap Monthly Workshops

4 April, 14 May, 4 June, 2 July 2023

Venue: Pineapple Dance Studios, London, UK

A series of monthly workshops were set up in central London.

<http://annettewalker.co.uk/2023/04/rhythm-tap-workshop-monthly/>



Annette Walker

Monthly (gen/int level)

**RHYTHM
TAP
WORKSHOP**

SUN DAY

2 April 2023	4pm-6pm
14 May 2023	12pm-2pm
4 June 2023	11.30am-1.30pm
2 July 2023	12pm-2pm

Pineapple
DANCE STUDIOS

Annette led April and June workshops. Rhythm tap dance teachers, Lee Payne and Diane Hampstead, were booked as guest teachers to deliver the workshops in May and July 2023, respectively. Musicians were invited to accompany sessions.



Description: Group photo after Lee Payne's tap workshop

Tap Ambassadors

Current Tap Ambassadors:

(since August 2021) non-paying, young adult tap students:

- Aaron Davies
- Akosua Balogun (alsp JDE member)
- Chisara Agor (also JDE member)

Additional JDE participants:

- Jreena Green (artistic director)

- Jemima Tawose (new JDE member)

In addition to practical tap sessions that include historical context, Tap Ambassadors were offered the opportunity to accompany and assist with teaching and on professional engagements to learn about working as a tap dancer. This was particularly important in settings where there is no knowledge about the technical requirements of tap and so the dancer is also a technical tap consultant.

Teaching assistant

With the pause on the weekly Tap Programme, Tap Ambassadors were invited to assist Annette with Monday evening, absolute beginners tap course for adults at Bishopsgate Institute, a cultural centre for leisure and learning in London. Aaron has been assisting since March which has helped build his tap technique and self-confidence.

Teaching assistant collaboration with JDE

As part of an agreement for use of the Colombo Centre studio space, Jreena Green offers low-rate community classes and has engaged Aaron to assist with children's tap sessions, putting aspects of the Tap Programme into further use. Regular updates of their progress are shared with Annette.



Description: Children's tap class with Tap Ambassador Aaron Davies (back right), Jreena Green (front right) and supporter, Theresa Early MBE (middle)

Other tap assistant roles

MOVE IT, London

11, 12 March 2023

Venue: ExCeL London, UK

Tap Ambassadors, Akosua & Aaron and new JDE member Jemima shared in assisting Annette with 2 tap workshops at MOVE IT “the world's biggest... dance event.”

11 March Workshop: Shim Sham: Analysis of Tap Dance’s National Anthem - Teacher’s CPD

Teacher: Annette Walker

Assistants: Akosua & Jemima



Description: CPD workshop participant teachers with Annette and Jemima (in front)

12 March Workshop: Call and Response in Rhythm Tap Dance - open level

Teacher: Annette Walker

Assistants: Akosua & Aaron



Description: post-class group photograph

12 March - Tap Attack's World's Largest Tap Lesson

An opportunity emerged to participate in the World Guinness largest tap class organised by Tap Attack at MOVE IT 2023. Annette arranged for Tap Ambassadors, Aaron and Akosua to attend.

Duke Ellington - Sacred Concert by Vivace Chorus featuring tap dancing by Annette Walker

18 March 2023

Venue: G Live, Guildford, Surrey, UK

Archived details: <https://www.vivacechorus.org/vc/event/duke-ellington-sacred-concert>

Performer: Annette Walker (featured tap solo)

Assistant: Aaron Davies

Tap Dance Lore

A new (free) WordPress website was voluntarily set up by Annette to accompany the Tap Programme history discussed in classes and encourage students to watch footage, think critically about history and seek out further information. Discussions have included the origins of the Shim Sham, the different versions and the role of counting.

<https://tapdancelore.wordpress.com/>

Student Sharing

Annette Walker and the Rhythmaticians

17 March 2023

Venue: Watermill Jazz , Dorking, Surrey, UK

Jreena Green ensured both her JDE members and Tap Ambassadors were able to attend the performance by overseeing their transportation. I was able to incorporate an impromptu Shim Sham during my the show accompanied by my band.

Archived details:

<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/whats-on/dorking/watermill-jazz/annette-walker-and-the-rhythmaticians/e-oxxyjy>



Description: After show photo with (left to right) Lee Payne (guest artist), Annette Walker (main performer/producer), Jreena Green (JDE director) and Annette's Tap Ambassadors: Chisara Agor, Akosua Balogun and Aaron Davies

Classic tap repertoire classes (closed session)

Led by Annette Walker, weekly classic tap repertoire classes were scheduled at Colombo Centre in June 2023 to prepare TA students for performances. Band members were invited to accompany sessions.

Note: due to the usage limitation of the studio floor, sessions were unable to be open to additional students.

TDRN UK Research Festival 2023

24 June 2023

Venue: The Dancehouse, Manchester, UK

As part of the Research Festival, there was a discussion on tap teaching practices and classic repertoire. London based Tap Ambassadors had the opportunity to perform with tap students from different parts of the country as part of a sharing of classic tap repertoire. They also attended the full, in-person day of the Festival and jam session.

Programme event: Teaching Tap Legacies with Hannah Ballard, Annette Walker and Jess Murray

<http://tdrnuk.com/research-festival-2023/>

Note: Transportation from London to Manchester for the Festival was provided by combined funding of both the TDRN UK and the Tap Programme.

Rhythm Tap Tales & Tap Jam

6 July 2023

Venue: The Albany, London, UK

Part 1: sharing of a newly developed show of improvised tap solo storytelling with live piano accompaniment

Part 2: a tap jam with live band and invited guests including a performance of classic repertoire by TP Tap Ambassadors

Information: <http://annettewalker.co.uk/tap-dance/rhythm-tap-tales/>

Tickets on sale 6 June 2023

Note: The event was supported with The Albany community award, Pizza & Pitches (2022)

Next steps

Floor panels are to be arranged to be able to resume regular tap sessions at Colombo Centre. The Tap Ambassadors practice and knowledge of tap dance will continue to be developed,

aiming towards a professional level. The Tap Programme will seek further funding to continue to offer low-cost tap classes in classic repertoire, talks and studio jams.

Acknowledgements

Annette Walker would also like to thank the CTTI for the opportunity to develop her vision of tap dance for the next generation, especially in a community with talented young people who are less likely to have access to tap classes or its history. She would also like to thank the ongoing support of Jreena Green, Natalie Bell and her mentor, Dr Gary Crosby OBE.

Additional links

Annette Walker Tap Dance Programme

<http://annettewalker.co.uk/2021/10/tap-dance-programme/>

Coin Street Centre Trust

<https://coinstreet.org>

Jreena Green of Jazz Dance Elite

<https://www.jreenagreen.com/>