

# Springs Dance Company

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Autumn/Winter 2008

Welcome to our Autumn/Winter Newsletter where we hope to inspire and excite you with news of work past and present.

This year we said a teary au revoir to another group of dancers from *elevate dance company* who studied under us for a year before touring the country with work that was made especially for them. Three of these apprentices write later to tell you about their experiences.

We also performed an incredible 32 shows of our children's double-bill *Waterbugs and Dragonflies* and

*The Wemmick Story*. We toured from Alnwick to Eastbourne performing to over 4000 people. The majority of these shows were at theatres and community venues, with six more at churches. We have been received with huge appreciation, happy parents and enthusiastic children. An independent review called it "a visual delight" and children left the theatre dancing and skipping. We can only guess at the wider impact but we certainly felt that we left theatres much brighter than when we arrived!

A highlight of our year was performing in Paul Field's *Cargo*, a musical that brings awareness to the real problem of modern day slavery. Carrying the message 'Nobody is free until everybody is free', this musical met the wishes of some of our dancers to use dance to directly tackle the hardships faced by so many today, in this case human trafficking, child labour, unfair trade and poverty.

Next we settled down for the much anticipated cathedrals tour: *Living the Eucharist*. Knowing that we needed a Jesus character, we auditioned for two male dancers and from the 35 applicants, we selected David Willdridge and Luke Wells. The creative period began in mid-August when the Belfast-based choreographer Suzannah McCreight began creating a dance that would challenge, unravel and celebrate the heart of the Eucharist tradition - the taking of bread and wine. The project was commissioned by Aelred Arnesen whose vision to explore the topic through dance inspired the whole project. *Living the Eucharist* was danced 'in-the-round' to show how we are all invited as equals by Jesus into close relationship and community through the taking of bread and wine.

Looking forward we are now preparing for the twelfth tour of our most popular show *Journey of the Magi*. Look out for it at a venue near you!

For 2009 we are currently planning a new show made especially with teenagers in mind. *Five a Day* will be based on the "Fruits of the Spirit" which are love, joy, patience, kindness, goodness, peace, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. *Five a Day* will be designed to inspire and challenge young people, and promises to be both entertaining and compelling whatever your age.

Ruth Hughes, Artistic Director

*Journey of the Magi* - Look out for Springs' Advent Tour coming to a venue near you. (Note that tour dates are subject to change so you are advised to contact the Box Office in advance. The latest list of tour dates is on our website.) There are still some dates available for churches to host this entertaining and vibrant performance, but be quick as dates are going fast. Please contact the office for more details.





## ***elevate dance company 2008***

We asked three apprentices to write a few words about their experiences of being in *elevate dance company 2008*.

Lydia and Esther are now studying at Laban: "Our year on the Apprenticeship Scheme was filled with experiences that made us laugh, cry, think, pray, work hard, be excited, nervous, but overall made us the people we are now. The tour was overwhelming but, despite the exhaustion,

arriving at a new venue to enthusiastic people rubbed off on us. Our knowledge of the dance world increased over the year and, through working alongside and being taught what Springs Dance Company does, we had a journey finding God in dance. This gap year has given us a foundation of contemporary dance within a Christian context that has significantly prepared us for our further studies into dance at Laban."

Sophie is now working with northantsDance: "The Springs Apprenticeship Scheme offers something for everyone. The unusually supportive and nurturing environment allowed us to develop our individual dancing talents. The opportunity to interact with such a variety of people through dance stirred my own faith and was truly inspiring."

We are now taking applications for the Springs Apprenticeship Scheme in 2009-10. Please contact the office for further information.

## ***Living the Eucharist...***

Hello, my name is Luke and I joined Springs for the *Living the Eucharist* tour. This was a very special project for me, not only as it was my first job since graduating from dance school but because it helped me gain strength and comfort in my everyday life. Mixing dance with faith has been a very rewarding and challenging experience, and the amazing people I have met and shared this experience with along the way have given me something invaluable...friendship. I could not have done this project without their constant love and support...thank you. :o) x



**Luke Wells, Dancer**

## **Looking ahead...**

Hi I'm Naomi, a dancer with Springs. In September, after over 30 performances, we hung up our bright bug costumes and wooden joints, ending this year's national tour of *Springs For Children: Waterbugs and Dragonflies* and *The Wemmick Story*. One month later I attended *Children Will Listen*, a talk 'exploring the challenges facing artists and promoters in the UK to create and present contemporary dance shows for children' organised by Dance UK and Dance Umbrella. I was really encouraged to realise that we are already meeting the challenges that children's work presents and that there is a real demand for what we are doing.

With this discussion ringing in my mind, I look forward to reaching more children (and parents, grandparents etc!) with our planned new children's show for 2010.



**Naomi Cook, Dancer**

## ***Journey of the Magi Tour 2008***

Friday 5 December, 7.30pm  
The Vineyard Church, St Albans  
01727 812 765  
[info@stalbansvineyard.com](mailto:info@stalbansvineyard.com)

Saturday 6 December, 4pm  
Christ Church, Coldharbour, Dorking  
01306 737 160  
[revanberry@aol.com](mailto:revanberry@aol.com)

Tuesday 9 December, 7.30pm  
The Electric Theatre, Guildford  
01483 444 789  
[electrictheatre@guildford.gov.uk](mailto:electrictheatre@guildford.gov.uk)

Wednesday 10 December, 7pm  
The Lister Club, Dursley, Glos  
01453 546 775  
[admin@3cdursley.org](mailto:admin@3cdursley.org)

Saturday 13 December, 2.30pm  
Methodist Central Hall, Westminster  
020 7654 3809  
[church@mchw.org.uk](mailto:church@mchw.org.uk)

Sunday 14 December, 3pm  
The Shaftesbury Centre, Deptford  
020 8691 2085  
[tessa.chapman@thebear.tv](mailto:tessa.chapman@thebear.tv)  
[www.thebear.tv](http://www.thebear.tv)

Monday 15 December, 7pm  
Christ Church Centre, Henley  
01491 577 414  
[davep@dtwo.co.uk](mailto:davep@dtwo.co.uk)

Thursday 18 December, 7.30pm  
The Gate, Cardiff  
029 2048 3344  
[www.thegate.org.uk](http://www.thegate.org.uk)

Friday 19 December, 7pm  
Caldicott School, Farnham Royal, Bucks  
01753 642 251  
[david.mayhew@talktalk.net](mailto:david.mayhew@talktalk.net)

Saturday 20 December, 7pm  
Central Methodist Church, Blackburn  
01254 883427 / 07970 450 257  
[chris\\_talbot@ntlworld.com](mailto:chris_talbot@ntlworld.com)

Sunday 21 December, 7pm  
Sutton Salvation Army, Sutton  
020 8642 9862  
[suttonsa@xalt.co.uk](mailto:suttonsa@xalt.co.uk)

**All photographs by Simon Richardson**