



IRIE! dance theatre
Moonshot Centre
Fordham Park, Angus Street
New Cross, London SE14 6LU

About IRIE! dance theatre

A Snapshot

Arts & Culture

IRIE! dance theatre was founded in 1985 with the primary aim to lift the profile of Black dance and dancers in Britain. From the start, the company has been at the cutting edge of fusing Caribbean dance as part of its choreographic expression. The company has developed a dance vernacular that is instantly recognised as the IRIE! style, which is directly linked to the essence of reggae music and Caribbean culture. IRIE! has created over 25 works, which have toured nationally and internationally.

IRIE! is Britain's leading dance theatre company working in the field of African and Caribbean dance fusion and training. The Company's musical orientations are drawn from African and Caribbean drumming and percussion, Reggae and Ragga, Calypso and Soca. The term for dance and music-related forms within this genre is recognised by the dance sector as Dance of the African Diaspora (DAD).

Community & Wellbeing

The company delivers a highly effective and much sought after, local and national, training and outreach programme reaching between 3,500-4000 young people and adults on an annual basis. IRIE! works with a range of young people and organizations that support them. The community outreach work focuses on activities, which include intergenerational programmes, activities for families, and local open-access classes and events. The organisation has forged local and national partnerships using movement and culture to support the wellbeing and upliftment of communities. Partnerships include primary and secondary schools, colleges, universities, NHS, local authorities, arts and community centers' and more.

Education & Training

IRIE! is committed to the development of all artists working in the field of DAD. The company delivers a number of classes and initiatives, which support DAD practitioners. These include open classes, professional development and master classes. In partnership with City and Islington College and London Metropolitan University, IRIE! delivered the UK's first Foundation Degree in Dance with African and Caribbean dance at the core from 2008 - 2018, and from September 2018 – June 2023 IRIE! delivered the UK's first BA (Hons) Diverse Dance Styles validated by University of Roehampton. Since September 2023 Goldsmith's London University now validates the company's BA (Hons) and New MA in Diasporic Dance Styles.

IRIE has commissioned and produced important pieces of research into Dance of the African Diaspora (DAD); Namely the Arts Council-funded research paper on the need for an archive for Black dance in Britain and the Dance and Diversity Research Project looking at the place of African & Caribbean dance within Britain's formal education system. Dedicated to its main aim the company is committed to making its base at Moonshot a focal point, and Centre of excellence for the practice and development of DAD.

Moonshot Centre

Moonshot is a £3m refurbishment of a disused community Centre located in New Cross, South East London. Aside from the large open-plan office space with an adjacent library and archive, the Company, also have access to 2 large dance studios, 1 seminar room, 1 teaching/meeting room and 1 small Café. In 2017 IRIE! took on the management of the centre, which also houses Playhouse Nursery and Double Jab Boxing Club. This has enabled us to expand the offer and choice of activities we provide to the local community. For example, we can hire spaces for a range of workshops for all age groups with the view to increasing community engagement and providing a creative space for development.

Partnerships

Over the years IRIE! has nurtured and developed a number of important and inspired partnerships. These partnerships have included: London Borough of Lewisham; City & Islington College; Birkbeck College, Goldsmiths, University of London; One Dance UK, The Phoenix Federation; NHS-South London, Moseley (SLAM) and The Black-e in Liverpool, to name a few.

IRIE! dance theatre Performance Company

IRIE! dance theatre became an Arts Council England (ACE) National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) in 2023.

After an 18-years hiatus where we were paying particular attention to gaps in diversity in dance education and training. After such a long gap it was necessary to investigate the need and relevance for the performance work. We undertook a Research and Development process, delving into the performance archive. The newly engaged dancers and musicians led by the Artistic Director and commissioned experts in West African & Caribbean dance and culture explored the roots and legacy of past works, looking into the traditions and heritage that have shaped contemporary African and Caribbean dance.

The new work entitled *FOUNDATION-Dancing from the Archive* reflects on 38 years of creative and performance history exploring the roots of the company and the basis of its movement language to amplify the nuances echoed in African and Caribbean culture. Combined with live drumming and percussions *FOUNDATION* demonstrate the resilience, beauty, and energy in DAD as this new generation of performers investigate the rituals, traditions and heritage that shapes their identity.

FOUNDATION is firmly rooted in IRIE!'s repertory of performance work.

Organsiational Structure

