



DANCE TODAY TEACHER OF THE YEAR 2015

To mark the return of *Dance Today* Teacher of the Year, **Marianka Swain** asked some of the dance world's luminaries to pay tribute to the instructors who made a real difference in their lives

Behind every great dancer is a great teacher. That's why *Dance Today* is proud to launch the next instalment of our annual competition celebrating the UK's best dance teacher – one of several thousand hard-working, dedicated and inspiring individuals who shape the performers, choreographers, competitors and industry leaders of tomorrow...

"The most influential teacher I had was Jimmy Williams at Pineapple Studios. I attended

his classes in locking and popping for many years. Jimmy is an excellent teacher – an incredibly inspiring man, and someone I've always looked up to. I know I would not be alone in singling him out as having had a huge influence on many of the dancers of my generation."
Kate Prince, artistic director of ZooNation

"The important thing for us in a dance teacher is someone who understands your dynamic as a couple, works with your strengths and isn't afraid to think outside the

box – and we were fortunate enough to find all of those qualities in our amazing original trainer, Ray Bulpitt."
Paula Moulton and Gary Lyness, international wheelchair dancesport champions

"I wouldn't have a dance career if it wasn't for Manny Castro and his wife Lory... He really believed in me... Believing in someone makes a good dance teacher... I was never the most flexible girl; I never had the best feet; I was never the most naturally good, but I did have very good rhythm..."

"Manuel always said, 'I feel the passion in you, Janette, and I feel you will work hard at it' – and that's what a good teacher is: someone who doesn't take someone on just because they're good but because they feel they have the passion and the drive."

Janette Manrara, Strictly Come Dancing pro

"There are two who stick out in particular – Karen King and Barbara Duffy... A great

dance teacher can have such a big influence on a dancer, and words of wisdom can stay with you for a lifetime. Finding a teacher who knows their craft and who clearly loves to pass on their knowledge is very special."

Jo Scanlan, co-founder of Tap Attack

"My dance teacher from the ages of three to 18 was Miss Doris Dorbon, who had a small school in Sidcup, Kent... Her teaching ultimately led to my lifelong love of dance as an audience member and to a fulfilling career working with dancers. Miss Dorbon is still teaching today in her eighties!"

Caroline Miller, director of Dance UK

This year, for the first time ever, the winning teacher will be announced publicly and presented with his or her trophy at Dancing at the

Tower at Blackpool Tower Ballroom on March 28, 2015.

The competition is open to all styles of dance, though the teacher should be based in the UK and cannot be a winner of the title within the last two years. The teacher with the most reader votes will win the title.

The Teacher of the Year will win a specially created *Dance Today* trophy (a framed cover of the magazine starring them), a feature about them and their studio in the magazine, and a year's free subscription to *Dance Today* and sister magazine, *Dancing Times*, plus a pair of tickets to a dance show (details to be confirmed), a selection of dance CDs, DVDs and other goodies, as well as the honour of being *Dance Today's* top Teacher of the Year.

Dance Today will contact the shortlisted candidates on the week beginning March 9, to give them plenty of time to

plan their trip to Blackpool Tower Ballroom. Shortlisted teachers will be asked to provide *Dance Today* with a high-quality photograph of themselves in action, so we can prepare the cover-trophy.

The gala evening on March 28 will include music by the fabulous Ross Mitchell, His Band and Singers, Young Champions in Cabaret, Learn and Improve sessions with hosts and teachers Warren Bullock and Jane Phillips, and Philip Wylie and Christine Parsons, and the announcement of our Teacher of the Year. For tickets, which cost £12 in advance, £15 on the door (subject to availability), visit www.theblackpooltower.com or call 0871 222 9929. For more information on the night email Philip Wylie (info@holidayanddance.co.uk), visit www.holidayanddance.co.uk or call 01895 632 143. ●

HOW TO VOTE
Tell us why your dance teacher deserves to win and send your entry to us at:
Post: "Dance Today Teacher of the Year competition", Dancing Times Limited, 45–47 Clerkenwell Green, London EC1R 0EB
Email: nicola@dance-today.co.uk
Voting closes on **March 6, 2015**

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YOUR NAME:.....

CONTACT DETAILS (EMAIL OR TELEPHONE NUMBER):.....

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NAME OF THE DANCE TEACHER YOU WOULD LIKE TO NOMINATE:.....

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WHY DOES YOUR TEACHER DESERVE TO WIN?

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