

SUMMER EDITION, 2023



Spanish Dance Society Sociedad de Danza Española

NEWSLETTER



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“Dancing feeds the heart and soul”

GREETINGS TO YOU ALL.

TIME SEEMS TO BE TICKING BY AT AN EVER RACING PACE, INDEED, IN AN EVER EVOLVING WORLD IT IS HEARTWARMING. TO SEE HOW YOU HAVE ALL EMBRACED THE READINESS TO THRIVE AND SUCCEED AS YOU TAKE THE SPANISH DANCE SOCIETY. TO HIGHER STANDARDS, WHICH IS TRULY A REMARKABLE GOAL.

THIS IS NOT ONLY IN THE QUALITY OF AUTHENTICITY AND MAINTAINING OF THE TRUE STYLE – BUT OUR EXPANSION WORLDWIDE HAS BEEN EXCEPTIONAL. MAY THE INCREDIBLE INTERNATIONAL TEACHERS AND EXAMINERS IN ALL THE CENTRES CONTINUE TO SHARE THEIR KNOWLEDGE WITH DEDICATION AND LOVE.

HAVING TAKEN OVER THE POSITION FROM OUR PAST HONORARY LIFE PRESIDENT, THE LATE DAME MARINA KEET DE GRUT WITH MUCH HUMILITY, MY EVERLASTING GRATITUDE GOES OUT TO HER FOR THE KNOWLEDGE AND HARD WORK SHE GAVE TO THE ADVANCEMENT OF OUR SOCIETY.....WE ALL HOLD HER IN OUR HEARTS.

CONGRATULATIONS TO YOULA PAPAS AND VASSILLIS SKEPETARIS FROM GREECE AND CARLI OLIVIER FROM SOUTH AFRICA, WHO THIS YEAR RECEIVED MY PRESIDENT’S AWARD FOR THEIR UNWAVERING CONTRIBUTION TO OUR SOCIETY.

A BIG THANK YOU TO CONCHITA DEL CAMPO AND ALL MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR THE TIME AND PATIENCE GIVEN TO THE SMOOTH RUNNING OF OUR SOCIETY.

I WISH YOU ALL THE VERY BEST FOR THE REST OF THE YEAR AND PLEASE CARRY ON WITH YOUR AMAZING WORK.

WITH GRATITUDE,

**SIR GEOFFREY NEIMAN.
HONORARY LIFE PRESIDENT.**



FAREWELL



FORMER HONOURARY LIFE PRESIDENT-DAME MARINA KEET

You would all be aware of the passing in June 2022 of our Honorary Life President, who was dearly loved by many.

Dame Marina Keet will never be forgotten by all who knew her, danced with her, was taught by her, and examined by her.

Dame Marina will always be remembered for the warm and loving person that she was, her research and knowledge of Spanish Dance that she shared with everyone, her input in our wonderful syllabus, and promotion of Spanish Dance everywhere she went in the world. We are so grateful for the role she filled so brilliantly and enthusiastically, and the path she laid for her successors to follow...

INTRODUCING OUR NEW HONORARY LIFE PRESIDENT- SIR GEOFFREY NEIMAN

Sir Geoffrey was honoured to receive a KNIGHTHOOD "CRUZ DE OFICIAL DE LA ORDEN DE ISABEL LA CATOLICA" in 1999 from His Majesty King Juan Carlos of Spain.

He was a member of the famous Antonio Ruiz's Company" then joined "Luisillo Spanish Dance Company." whilst with the company for five years, they toured and danced globally. They joined "Paco Ruiz's" group, touring Europe. Geoffrey then returned to South Africa to partner Mercedes Molina in her Spanish dance company.

Geoffrey was a founding member of the Spanish Dance Society and choreographed the complete male syllabus. Additionally, he put his energy, experience, and knowledge into teaching and examining the SDS syllabus. After many successful years with the Mercedes Molina Company, and a lifetime partnership with her until her untimely death in 1978, he carried on running the company until he retired from dancing in 1982.

Since the last Newsletter of Winter 2021 we have been super busy creating, notating, and videoing the new SDS Vocational Programmes of Study (POS).

New choreographies have been added to the syllabus and generously donated to the SDS by Ana Morales, Fernando Galán, Marco Flores, Manuel Liñan, Marta de Troya, Nuria Garcia and Victoria Ramos.

We now have five Vocational Grades with the added elements of improvisation, and direction and teaching skills. Personal research undertaken by the students culminating in a written Journal and personal discussion with the visiting examiner has been welcomed as a replacement to the original theory section. We are very proud of our new syllabus because it contains a smoother learning curve from Intermediate to Professional Development levels, and all the new dances are now musically correct. We appreciate the fact that this means they are longer because they have not been cut for exam purposes. We felt this was a very important aspect that needed including in our training method because teachers and students will be able to experience and assimilate the correct musical phrasing of all the Palos. In fact, they have already noticed that the dances are easier to remember because they have a natural consecutive flow and final completion.

MESSAGE FROM:

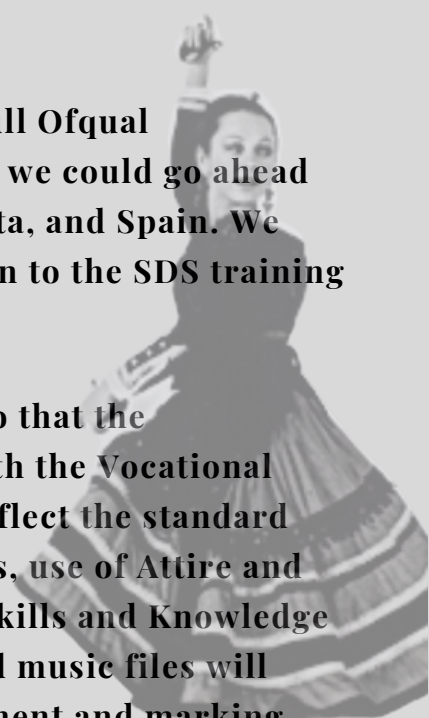
CONCHITA DEL CAMPO

**European Director and
Organiser**



We have also been busy training some more examiners (we hope you will enjoy reading some of their CVs in a later section of this newsletter) and have held numerous examiner standardisation meetings to aim to sort out discrepancies and to create a more universal standard among them. All the examiners also had training days with GQAL to cover the General Grades and Vocational (POS) Marking Systems.

This year we welcomed to the fold of examiners: Esperanza de los Reyes, Carmen Martinez Martinez from Spain, Grazia Maugeri from Sicily, Georgina Jacobs from South Africa, and Katerina Voulgari from Greece.



GOAL finally announced that by the 1st of March 2023, we had full Ofqual accreditation of our Vocational Programme of Study. Therefore, we could go ahead and enter the backlog of senior students from Greece, Italy, Malta, and Spain. We thank the teachers and students for their patience and dedication to the SDS training method.

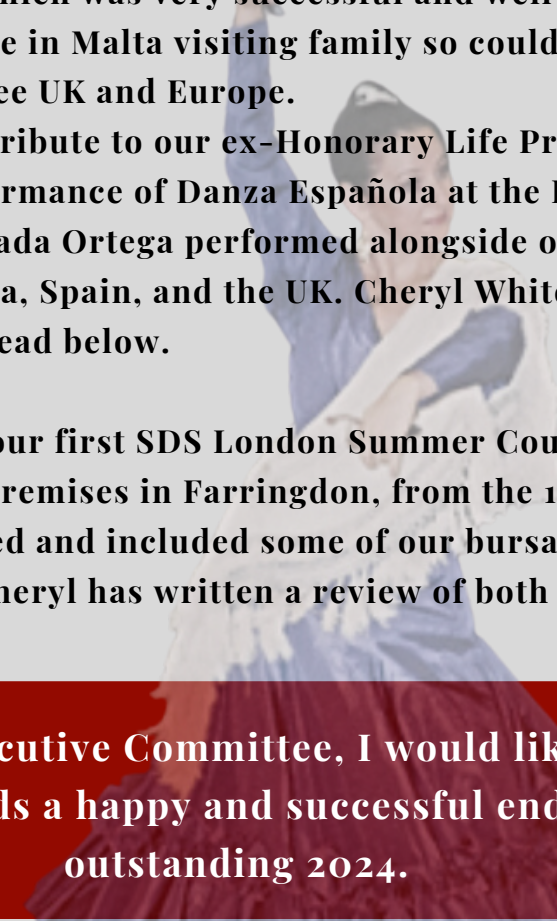
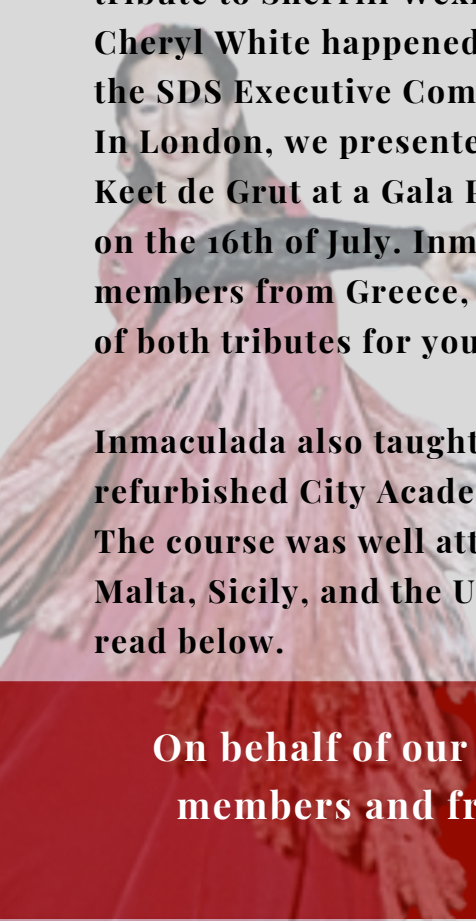
We have also been reviewing our eight General Graded exams, so that the Specifications' assessment and marking criteria come in line with the Vocational Specifications which means the final Profile Mark Sheets will reflect the standard of the candidates': Dexterity, Braceo, Zapateado, Vueltas, Ritmos, use of Attire and presentation of Dances alongside the Musicality, Performance Skills and Knowledge and Understanding. Subsequently the General Grades videos and music files will need to be spliced together differently to reflect the new assessment and marking criteria. Odette Kurland and I will do this in the autumn.

In January 2023 my ex-student Lara Darwazah who is currently living in Jordan approached us to help start an SDS centre in Amman the capital. We helped her with some sponsorship and arranged for Katerina Voulgari to teach 4 consecutive weekends starting on the 29th of April. There was excellent feedback from the participants, and they are preparing to take the Grade 2 examination in the Autumn. Katerina is also performing at the local tapas bar to raise interest and inspire more students to attend the courses.

On the 29th of April, Deborah McNamara presented a performance in Malta as a tribute to Sherrill Wexler which was very successful and well attended. Gary and Cheryl White happened to be in Malta visiting family so could attend and represent the SDS Executive Committee UK and Europe.

In London, we presented a tribute to our ex-Honorary Life President Dame Marina Keet de Grut at a Gala Performance of Danza Española at the Bloomsbury Theatre on the 16th of July. Inmaculada Ortega performed alongside other artists and SDS members from Greece, Malta, Spain, and the UK. Cheryl White has written a review of both tributes for you to read below.

Inmaculada also taught on our first SDS London Summer Course held at the newly refurbished City Academy premises in Farringdon, from the 12th to the 15th of July. The course was well attended and included some of our bursary winners from Malta, Sicily, and the UK. Cheryl has written a review of both tributes for you to read below.



On behalf of our Executive Committee, I would like to wish all our members and friends a happy and successful end of year and an outstanding 2024.

INTRODUCING OUR NEW DEPUTY CHAIR

CHERYL LISS



TO THE UK AND EUROPEAN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

It's amazing that Cheryl ended up being a dancer. Her mother tried taking her to ballet lessons when she was 5 years old, but she was so painfully shy that it was decided to try again the following year. Her ballet training thus began at the age of 6 with the Diana Jahlokoa-Vorps Dance School in Toronto, Ontario and by the age of 9, she joined the Canadian Junior Ballet Company.

When Cheryl was 13 years old she won a scholarship to the National Ballet School of Canada. It was here, in her senior years at the school, that she started Flamenco classes with the inspirational Susana y Antonio Robledo.

It was this couple who influenced her decision to return to Flamenco dance many years later.

At the NBS, Cheryl was the sole recipient of the Cecchetti Advanced Syllabus exam – honours standing.

After graduating, she was awarded a Canadian Council Arts Grant to continue her dance studies abroad in London. .



CHERYL WAS INVITED TO JOIN THE LONDON FESTIVAL BALLET COMPANY (NOW KNOWN AS ENGLISH NATIONAL BALLET). DURING HER TIME WITH ENB, SHE PERFORMED MANY MAJOR ROLES, TOURING ACROSS BRITAIN AND AROUND THE WORLD – IN SOUTH AMERICA, U.S.A., AUSTRALIA, CHINA AND THROUGHOUT EUROPE



She was also a founder member/dancer of the Education Unit of the company – demonstrating the ballet repertoire in colleges and universities within London.

Cheryl's freelance career included film work, dance education programmes in schools, and teaching professional ballet classes and repertoire in London, Spain and Iceland as well as guest appearances with other dance companies in London and Germany.

During a 1 year post graduate course in musical theatre at the London Studio Centre, she was chosen to co-star with Wayne Sleep in his production of Bits and Pieces followed by Andrew Lloyd Webber's Song and Dance.

While freelancing, Cheryl trained with the wonderful Conchita del Campo of the Spanish Dance Society, completing all her exams. On the day of passing her Tercer Año Estudiante with Honours, she proceeded to video the entire Escuela Bolera for the Maestro de Baile with Dame Marina Keet accompanying on castanets. This was a five-hour marathon!

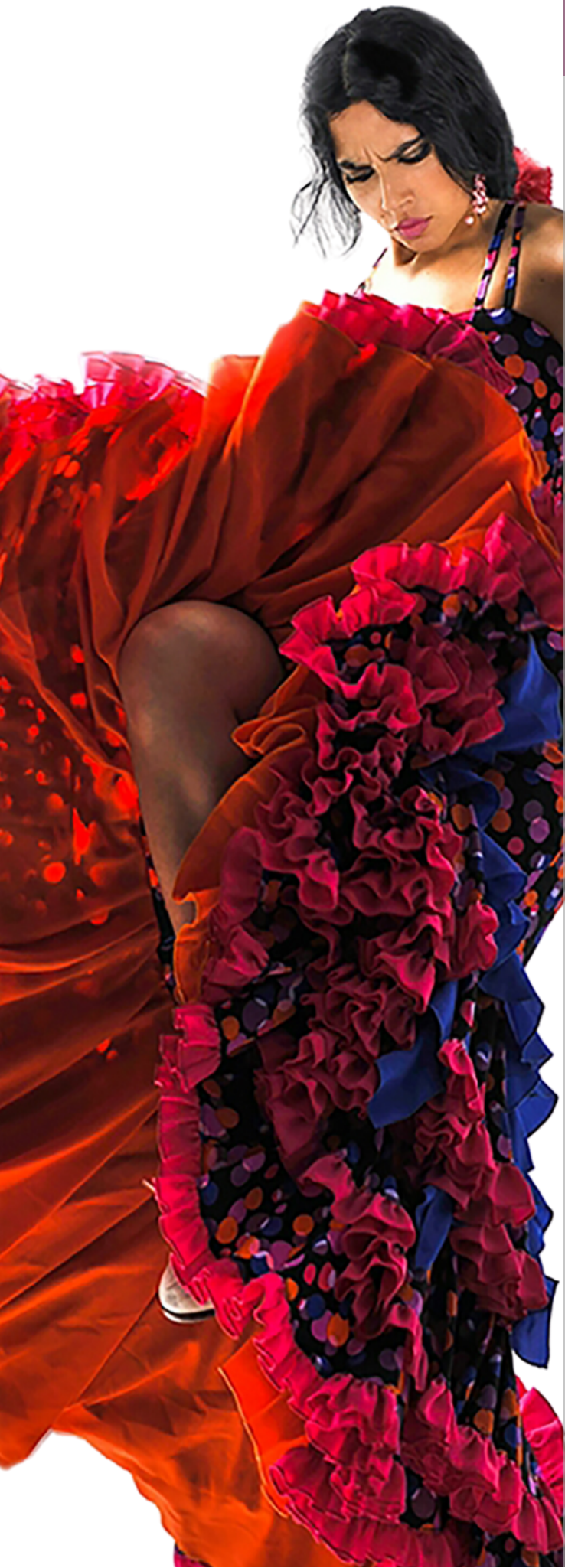
Cheryl is a qualified Level 3 teacher registered with Ofqual, and a founder member of the Body Control Pilates Association where she trained and examined teachers for 26 years, She is also a certified Bowen Technique Practitioner and a Rejuvenessence Therapist.

Since retiring from teaching, she has returned to dancing – her first love.

She feels privileged to be accorded the position of Deputy Chair for the SDS.



ELENI GIANNOPOULOU



INTRODUCING NEW EXAMINERS

Eleni Giannopoulou-Athens, Greece


Flamenco Dancer-Choreographer-Teacher

From an early age Eleni studied Spanish dancing with the great Lola Greco, Manolete, Raphaela Carrasco, Farruquito, El Guito, and Belen Maya, where through their love and affection she was not only taught to dance but also learned the philosophy and culture of flamenco.

As a flamenco soloist she has performed in the most honoured theatres of Greece, some of them being the National Opera of Greece, the Athens Concert Hall, Ancient and historical theaters, Rex Theater, Veakion and many more.

Being a member of various quadros flamencos such as “MACANDE”, “SOLERA”, “SOLEA” and more, she has performed in theatres and peñas of Spain-Seville, Berlin, Munich, Nuremberg, Cyprus, Albania along with others, accompanied by some of the most famous figuras flamencas like El Perla, Manuel El Tañe, Paco Iglesias, Alfredo Tejada, David el Galli, El Bonela Hijo, Andres Martinez, Luis El Salao, and El Picuo. The pinnacle of her career consists of the highly acclaimed performance “Callico Flamenco” where she danced in a duo with flamenco idol José Maya and were both praised by the audience in the Athens Concert Hall in 2014.

Eleni has been a dance partner of the great Oscar De Los Reyes for the years 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015 respectfully, with additional tours and sold out performances such as “Tentacion Flamenca” and “Flamenco Alchemy” which were accompanied by the string Orchestra ‘Intrati’.



In 2002, the Junta de Andalucia appointed her as the Spanish Tourism Spreading Ambassador through the art of flamenco during her tour throughout Germany, dancing alongside Luis el Salao, Luisa Chicano, and El Chato. As choreographer, she has orchestrated musicals, music performances of famous artists, and actors, television shows such as “Dancing with The Stars”, video clips, and more. Since 2003 she has owned and taught at her own flamenco academia “SOLEA” located in Athens where various classes, seminars, performances, and SDS examinations take place.

Life long partners and supporters of the acadmia are the great dancers Patricia Guerrero and Jose Maya.

Furthermore, Eleni holds possession of the title of PDB of the Spanish Dance Society with numerous commendations such as “Honours with Distinctions” and a scholarship for the Tercer Año Estudiante (2004).

Additionally, as a producer and choreographer she has worked in the following performances; 'El Paso Sigiente' 2010 (ILISIA THEATRE), 'El Pulso del Alma' 2011 (OPERA), 'Cuerda Viajera' 2012 (OPERA), 'DIEZ' 2013 (ACROPOL THEATRE), 'PASABIA' 2014 (ACROPOL THEATRE), 'El Rojo de la Rosa' 2015 (ACROPOL THEATRE), 'Cuento Nebo' 2016 (ACROPOL THEATRE), 'Centrifugo' 2017 (ACROPOL THEATRE), 'Bailes que Narran' 2018 (ACROPOL THEATRE), 'Hic et Nunc' 2019 (ACROPOL THEATRE)

GRAZIA MAUGERI

Profesor de Baile y Bailaora

(Catania 18/03/79)

She began studying classical ballet at the age of 5. Adding at the age of 11 also the study of Spanish dance, which from 1994 onwards deepened with masters such as Franca Roberto, Simona De Paola, Marc Aurelio and Antonia Moya.

She is the Artistic Director of the Academia de Baile Flamenco y Danza Española "Juerga Flamenca" of Acireale (CT). From 2008 to 2019, she collaborated with guest teachers such as Pepa Molina, Marta Jimenez, Miguel Angel Espino, Manuel Reyes, Cristina Benitez and Amelia Vega. In 2010 some of her photos were selected for the Photo Exhibition "La Plasticidad de flamenco". She is the only Italian artist published in the Spanish magazine "La Guia de Flamenco". Also, in 2010, she was included among the flamenco artists in the International Arena, in the online magazine "Flamenca, que mire Usted?".

In 2013 she received the Certificado Artístico from the Spanish Dance Society. In 2014 she received the award "Katania Creativa", and in 2016 the award "Pianeta Venere", which recognized her merits in her commitment to spreading flamenco and Spanish dance in Sicily (Italy).

From 2000 onwards she studied in Madrid (España) at the Academia de Baile Flamenco y Danza Española "Amor de Dios" with internationally renowned masters such as Enrique Pantoja, La Tati, La Truco, Paco Romero, María Magdalena, Cristobal Reyes...

In 2016 she participated in the Seminario de Flamenco y Danza Española organized by Carmela Greco, and in 2017 "Amalgama Flamenca" both held at the "Amor de Dios" de Madrid (España).

In 2004 she began her studies of the Spanish Dance Society Syllabus with Maria Luisa Ihre in Rome.

In 2012 she obtained her diploma Profesor de Baile Flamenco y Danza Española Cat. A (S.D.S.).

Since 2015 she has been a member of the "International Dance Council" (C.I.D.) – UNESCO.

In 2015 she was the flamenco face of the exhibition "Pablo Picasso and his Passions" performing at Castel Ursino and Cappella Bonajuto (Catania), Palazzo Corvaja (Taormina), Palazzo D'Amico (Milazzo).



Over the years she has won numerous National and International Competitions as a dancer and choreographer. With her Juerga Flamenca she brings to the stage numerous shows of her own production.

In the summer of 2022, she participated in the production of "Carmen" for the "Festival dei Teatri di Pietra" together with the corps de ballet of the "Ballet Español de Murcia" at the Greek Theatre of Syracuse – Ancient Theatre of Taormina – Greek Theatre of Tindari.

She currently teaches Flamenco and Spanish Dance, collaborating with various Sicilian schools.





MARIA LORCA MONTROYA

MARIA LORCA MONTROYA (Mandy-Lee Wiegman) was introduced to the dancing world at a very young age under the tutorship of her parents, José & Helena Montoya. Besides doing Spanish dancing with her parents, she also studied ballet and modern dancing with Diane Cassidy, but Spanish dancing soon proved to be her only passion.

Since the age of six years, she has been part of the José Montoya Spanish Dance Theatre's annual productions of España at the State Theatre, Pretoria. She performed with her parents at the Sun City Superbowl in 1993. In 1997, on a trip overseas, Maria was invited to perform as guest artist at the famous Viva España Restaurant, in the beautiful countryside of Valencia, Spain

On returning to South Africa after a year of travelling abroad, she performed with the internationally renowned choreographer and performer Antonio del Castillo, in both a theatre production (España '99) and a music video, which he directed, "La Luna, Luna". She participated in Sylvana Gironi's production of 'Carmen' at the Johannesburg Civic Theatre, as well as in 'Del Alma' whereafter she was nominated for a FNB Vita Award in the category 'Most Outstanding Female Dancer'. Maria Lorca has been asked to perform as a guest artist for a number of studios in Johannesburg, as well as for the Rosa Jimenez Spanish Dance Company in Sasolburg (where she also presented a Technical Course for Rosa's students in 2011).

She has also performed with The South African Ballet Theatre, adding a flavour of true Spanish dancing, in their productions of Carmen (2002) and Swan lake (2004). She has also taken part, with the Helena Montoya Spanish Dance Company, in three productions of 'Valentines Enchantment' at the State Theatre, Pretoria, working with The Black Tie Ensemble.



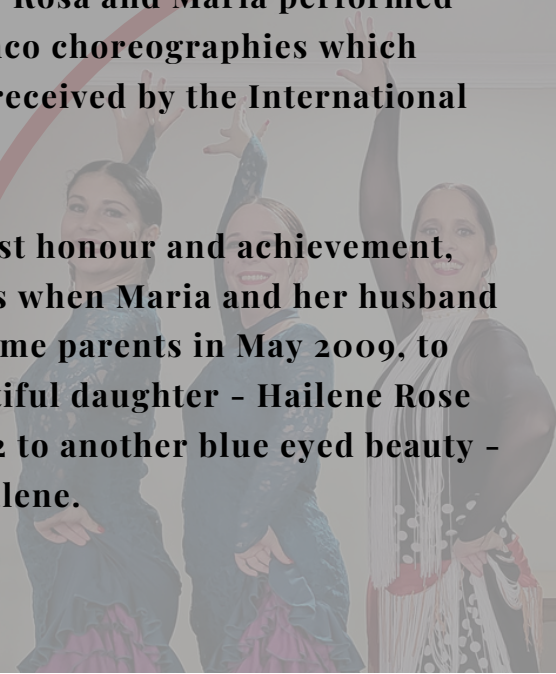
Maria Lorca has attended various courses with teachers brought out from Spain by The Spanish Dance Society and Alianza Flamenco, such as world renowned Victoria Ramos, La Tati, Inmaculada & Domingo Ortega and Angel Muñoz. Besides attending the 2000, 2002 and 2003 Spanish Dance Society's Summer School in London, she was invited to teach at this summer school in 2005. Besides doing regular show work (cabarets in and around Gauteng / performances with Ch2 Guitar Duo and Mischief Guitar Duo), Maria teaches from her newly built studio at home in Garsfontein, Pretoria as well as at Pro Arte Alphen Park High School where they do Spanish dance as a subject.



Maria has qualified for her full Juniors and Seniors teachers (IdB and PdB) with The Spanish Dance Society and is also an Examiner with the Spanish Dance Society. She has also gained her junior teachers with Alianza Flamenco.

Maria & her dancers were privileged enough to dance for Adidas and their guests at the final of the FIFA World Cup in 2010, at Soccer City in Johannesburg. By invitation of Dirk Badenhorst, Maria performed at the Lyric Theatre, Gold Reef City, in the 'Young Ballet Stars of the World' Gala event alongside her dancing partner, Rosa Jimenez. This led to an exciting event In June 2014, where Maria and Rosa were invited to perform at the world famous Busan International Dance Festival (BIDF) based in the marine capital of South Korea. This festival brought together 34 performances from 11 countries in Asia, Europe, Latin America, the United States and Africa. Rosa and Maria performed two flamenco choreographies which were well received by the International Audience.

The greatest honour and achievement, however, is when Maria and her husband Frans became parents in May 2009, to their beautiful daughter - Hailene Rose and in 2012 to another blue eyed beauty - Keah Madalene.





CARLI OLIVIER

Carli Olivier was born on the 7th of February 1984 in the Free State, South Africa. She started ballet at the age of 4 with Rosemary and Bart Saayman. A few years later she attended her first Spanish dance class and this soon became her passion and dance style of choice.

Carli won the Mercedes Molina bursary for her Tercer Año Estudiante examination and later completed her Instructor de Baile and Profesor de Baile certificate under the tutelage of Rhoda Rivkind.

In 2004, Carli opened her own studio and started annual studio productions featuring Carli Spanish Dance Productions student dancers.

Today we stand proud with Compañía Sophia as its own entity. They have been performing with some of the best in the arts industry, on many a stage in South Africa, and continue to be positively influenced and inspired during annual travels to Spain.

Carli is also the Spanish dance teacher at the Johannesburg Arts Conservatory in Johannesburg, South Africa, and a Choreographer/Teacher and Advisory board member at the WGruv Contemporary Ballet Company. Carli and her husband Jano Olivier got married in 2010 and have a beautiful 8-year-old daughter, Nina Sophia Olivier.





VASSILIS SKEPETARIS

EXAMINER-JUDGE-COACH-
TEACHER-DANCER-MUSICIAN



Vassilis Skepetaris has been occupied with dance and classical music since the age of ten. He has a Fellowship and is an Examiner of “International Dance Teachers Association” (IDTA). He possesses numerous certificates in dance: Fellowship in Ballroom, Fellowship in Latin, Fellowship in Freestyle, Fellowship in Cheerleading, Licentiate in Viennese Waltz, Licentiate in Rock n Roll, Diploma in Argentinian Tango, Diploma in Salsa, Stunt Diploma in Cheerleading, Profesor de Baile in Spanish Dance (SDS) for 20 years, Level 4 in dance Teaching in Ballroom (IDTA), Level 4 in dance Teaching in Latin (IDTA), Level 4 in dance Teaching in Freestyle (IDTA) and Level 4 in dance Teaching in Spanish Dance (SDS). He is also a Qualified Judge and Coach for Performance Cheer and Cheerleading “International Cheer Union” (ICU).



He has been a cheerleading champion in Greece for many years. He is a tutor of Spanish and Ballroom dance and prepares candidates for the professional title of Level 4 for IDTA and SDS. He has prepared more than 50 candidates for IdB and PdB of SDS and more than 50 for Associate, Licentiate and Fellowship of IDTA. He is a representative/president in Greece for the “Majorette Sport World Federation” (MWF). He has studied Professional music at Philippos Nakas, Orpheo and Apolonion Conservatories including studies on Theory, Harmony, History of Music, Morphology of Music, Analysis of musical instruments, Dictee, Prima Vista, Piano, French Horn, Saxophone. He has studied dance in Spain in the following dance schools: Amor de dios, La Union, Centro Andalúz, Clara Ramona studio, Centro de Baile Jerez with famous dancers and teachers like Andres Marín, Inmaculada Ortega, Antonio Canales, Juana Amaya, Javier LaTorre, Eva la Yerbabuena, Rafaela Carrasco, Timo Lozano, Ciro, Clara Ramona, Tomás de Madrid, Paco Valenzuela, Bolito Vargas, Isaac de los Reyes, Victoria Ramos, Fernando Galán, La Tati, La Chiqui, Conchita del Mar, Pepe Ruíz, Candela Soto, Gemma de la Cruz, Adolfo Vega, Lola Greco, Angel Munóz, Miguel Angel Espino, and Charo Espino.

He has accumulated many years of teaching experience in dance schools in Spain at the “Centro de Baile Jerez” in Andalucia and in a “Spanish and Classical dance school” in Valencia. In Greece at the Diana Theodoridou Dance School, Imperial Dance School, Dance Fever school, Roula Papadimitriou Dance School, Maria Stamataki Dance School, Maria Lazaridou Dance School, Elli Paraskeva Dance School. In 2000 has created the "Plaza de Baile" Dance School and in 2002 the dance group "Danza Flamenca Grupo". He has appeared both as a choreographer and a dancer in popular theatres such as the Herodium Theater, Nacional Opera of Greece, Badminton Theater, Athens Concert Hall, Thessaloniki Concert Hall, Pallas Theatre, Veakeio, Acropol, Kalouta, Katia Dandoulaki, Municipal Theatre of Volos, Municipal Theatre of Andros, National Theatre of Rhodes, Municipal Theatre of Rhodes, Municipal Theatre of Loutraki, Municipal Theatre of Kos, Festival of Symi, Festival Edipsos. He has directed and choreographed for performances of: Carmen, Salome, Orfeo y Euridice, Medea, and Don Quixote. Presently he is teaching the SDS and IDTA syllabus plus open classes and is preparing various candidates for exams, He is also preparing pupils for cheerleading Championships.

He is an examiner for the IDTA, Judge for ICU and IDTA, he plays the saxophone as a member of Philharmonic Orchestra and he is teaching classical music at the National, Thoukididio, and Aristotelio Conservatories. This year he has won an SDS President's Award for service to the SDS with his excellent IT skills.



ROSA JIMINEZ
SPANISH DANCE STUDIO

Roslynn Van Belkum

I was born in Pretoria, South Africa in 1974. At the age of 3 my family relocated to Sasolburg due to my father's work. I started ballet at the age of 6 and Spanish dancing at the age of 10 with the Bart Saayman & Rosemary Bana School of Ballet and Spanish Dancing in Sasolburg. As long as I can remember, all I ever wanted to do was dance and paint. Most of my youth was spent in the dance studio and the beautiful Etienne Rousseau Theatre in Sasolburg performing in annual shows & eisteddfods.

In 1994, I won the Mercedes Molina Bursary for the best exam candidate in Gauteng. Two years later I moved to Pretoria after completing my Advanced exam to complete a BTech degree in Fine Arts (Cum Laude) at the University of Tshwane and to further my dancing career with José & Helena Montoya Spanish Dance Theatre. I performed with the company for three years appearing at theatres all over the country as well as dancing regularly at Vive España Restaurant in Midrand.

In 2001, I decided to move to London in the hope of travelling and seeing the world. It was here that I met Conchita del Campo for the first time. She encouraged me to teach Spanish dancing. It was under her tutelage that I qualified as an Instructor de Baile for the Spanish Dance Society. Thereafter, I began teaching part-time at the London Dance Studio in Kings Cross for Conchita & the Gypsy Dance Booth in Watford. I co-presented Sevillanas courses at the City Literary Institute & similarly assisted Isabella Pachero at the Bishops Gate Institute.

During my 3 year stay in London, I performed at the Peña Flamenca de Londres on several occasions and was also invited to perform in Espiritu España at the Saint Michel Theatre in Brussels, Belgium together with Gemma de la Cruz, Manuel de Malena, Jesus Fernandez, Manuel Cazás Peña, Beran Parry and Sandra Doling.





Maria Lorca Montoya & I were invited to dance at the Busan International Dance Festival in Korea and teach a short course at a local University. We performed two items, a Farruca & Guajiras, at the festival. Later that year we performed in Maputo, Mozambique at a function held by the Spanish Ambassador.

I attended the London Summer School in 2001, 2002, 2003 & 2019. I also attended master classes with Vicki Ramos, La Tati, Alicia Guadalupé Gomez, Javier Baga, Immaculada Ortega, Juan Soto, José Salinas, Carolina Rosa, Domingo Ortega, Angel Muñoz, La Truco, Javier Castiñeiras, Chairo Espino, Miguel Angel Espino, Leonor Leal and more recently, Beatriz Morales & Adela Campallo.

In November 2011, I obtained my Professor de Baile Certificate from the Spanish Dance Society under the tutelage of Rhoda Rivkind. During the same time, I was chosen by the Spanish Dance Society to demonstrate the Junior SDS syllabus for an instructional DVD that was distributed to teaching members of the SDS worldwide and as a result was awarded the President's Award by Dame Marina Keet in London for my contribution to the Spanish Dance Society.

In December 2015, I performed together with teachers from all over the world at the Palau de la Musica in Valencia, Spain for the SDS's 50th anniversary celebrations after attending a course with Angel Muñoz, Chairo Espino and Miguel Angel Espino.

I have produced more than 10 successful Spanish dance shows at the ERT in Sasolburg, South Africa.

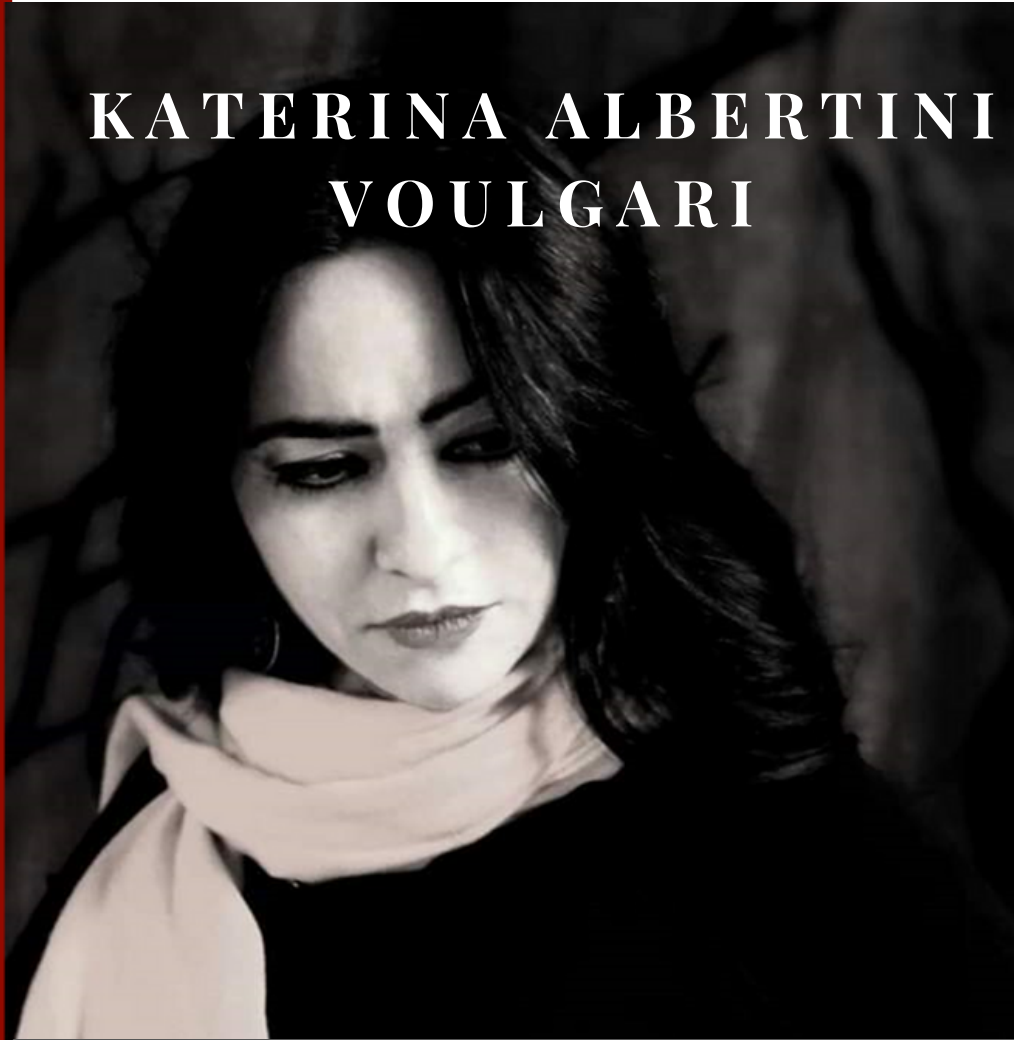
I relocated to the Western Cape three years ago. I am a Professional Fine Artist, Art Teacher & Vice-Chairman of the Spanish Dance Society in South Africa. I currently teach Spanish Dancing & Flamenco Fitness at a Chiropractic studio in Melkbosstrand, The West Coast Dance Academy as part of their faculty and at Blouberg International School in the Western Cape. I recently qualified as an examiner for the International Spanish Dance Society.

Katerina was born in Athens Greece and started her dancing career at the age of seven in Athens at the professional dancing schools of Dianna Theodoridou and Katia Savrami. She continued her Spanish dance studies in Spain, in the studios of Amor de Dios in Madrid, La Union in Sevilla, and Centro de Baile Jerez in Jerez de la Frontera attending courses and seminars by many famous dancers and teachers of Spanish culture.

Over the years her teachers have been: Rafaela Carrasco, Mercedes Ruíz, Fernando Galán, Titi, Eva la Yerbabuena, Manolo Marín, Andres Pena, Angel Muñoz, Eli 'La Truco', Gemma de la Cruz, Inmaculada Ortega, Pepe Ruíz, La Farruca, Victoria Ramos, Maria Serrano, Joaquín Grillo, Javier LaTorre, Charo Espino, El Farruco, Adrián Sanchez, Carolina Rosa 'La Negra', José Manuel Ramos 'El Orruco', Juan Manuel Carillo, Virginia Dominguez, La Hachara, Rosa Belmonte, Miguel Angel Espino, Andres Marín, Isaac de los Reyes, Isabel Bayón, Juana Amaya, Timo Lozano, Antonio Reyes, Candel Soto, Adolfo Vega, Cristian Almodovar, Cristian Lozano, Tamara Lopez, Antonio Canales, Manuel Bedanzos, Raul Ortega, Marco Jimenez, Angel Fariña Sanchez, Manuel Buzón, Alejandro Molinero, Maria Juncál, Soraya Clavijo, Niño de los Reyes, Olga Pericet, Marco Flores, Concha Jareño, Amelia Vega, Laura Segovia, Marta de Troya.



KATERINA ALBERTINI VOULGARI

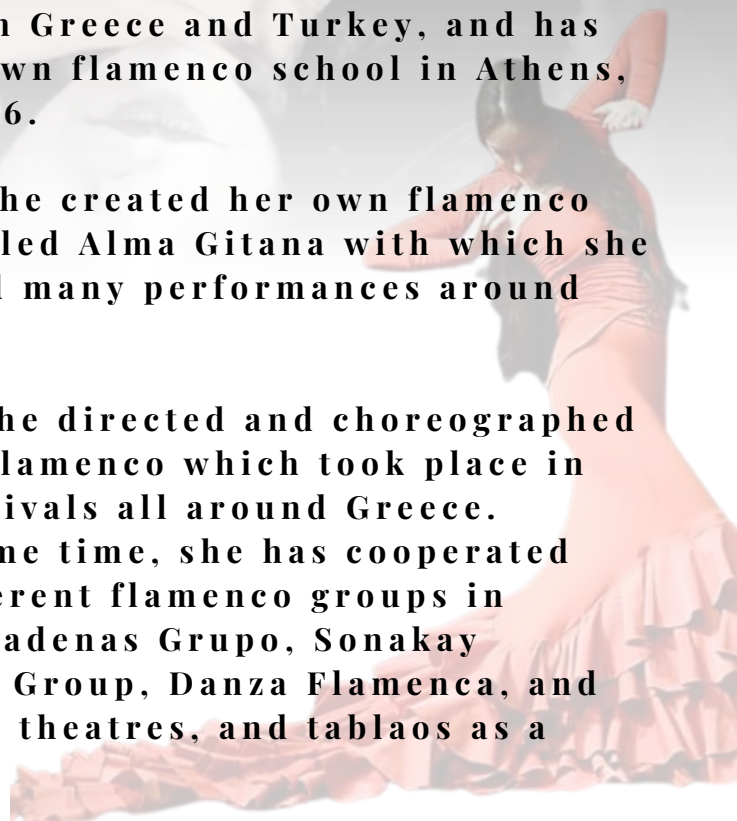


**PROFESSIONAL FLAMENCO DANCER
TEACHER/CHOREOGRAPHER/EXAMINER**

She has teaching experience at various schools in Greece and Turkey, and has had her own flamenco school in Athens, since 2006.

In 2006 she created her own flamenco group called Alma Gitana with which she presented many performances around Greece.

In 2007 she directed and choreographed Carmen Flamenco which took place in many festivals all around Greece. At the same time, she has cooperated with different flamenco groups in Greece: Cadenas Grupo, Sonakay Flamenco Group, Danza Flamenca, and danced in theatres, and tablaos as a soloist.



In 2019 she danced with maestro Rene Heredia and his Flamenco Fantasy group at Cherokee Range Castle and Clock Tower, in Denver USA.

In 2019 she taught flamenco workshops at Pera Güzel Sanatlar Istanbul, Turkey.

In 2020 she taught a workshop in Malta.

In 2021 she taught online lessons via zoom for Intermediate and Advanced students in Malta, at Deborah McNamara's dancing school.

In 2009, Danza Flamenca presented Salome Flamenco with Katerina in the soloist role of Salome.

She has also danced in Malta, the U.S.A., Russia, China, Georgia, Jordan, and Turkey at the International Flamenco Festival in Ankara in 2011, and in Greece in big theatres and music venues collaborating with famous singers and musicians.

Since 2009 she has been teaching flamenco seminars and courses in Izmir, Ankara, and Istanbul in Turkey.

This year, in 2023, she successfully started a Spanish Dance Society Centre in Amman Jordan.

In 2010 she worked on Orfeo y Euridice Nuevo Flamenco as a choreographer and producer.

In 2011 she represented Greece at the 5th International Flamenco Festival in Ankara Turkey, with her flamenco group Alma Gitana.

In 2012,13,14 she directed and danced in Directo Flamenco, ReGolpe, Nostalgia Flamenca at the National Music Hall of Athens.

In 2015 -2018 for the first time, she introduced examination sessions for the Spanish Dance Society in Turkey with great success.



In 2016 she performed as soloist dancer in "Inicio Flamenco" in Malta. In 2018 she directed and choreographed Carmen in Izmir Turkey.

TEACHING DIPLOMAS:

DIPLOMA DE PROFESOR DE LA DANZA ESPAÑOLA (PdB) SPANISH DANCE SOCIETY

DANCE EDUCATION SYSTEM AT ALL LEVELS:

FLAMENCO, ESCUELA BOLERA, DANZA ESTILIZADA, REGIONAL SPANISH DANCE.

CERTIFIED RECOGNIZED and APPROVED IN EUROPE, by PAA AND OFQUAL GOVERNING BODIES.

NEWS FROM GREECE

YOULA PAPAS

AFTER A DIFFICULT SUMMER FOR GREECE WITH THE HUGE FIRES IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE COUNTRY THE SCHOOL YEAR GRADUALLY BEGAN AS PARENTS WERE A LITTLE SKEPTICAL TO COME BACK TO CLASSES.

At the end of July 2022, some students of Artemis Dimou, Eleni Giannopoulou, Kalliopi Panagopoulou, and Stella Pappa represented Greece and took part in FAMA FLAMENCA, a fantastic show in the Villa Marta theatre in Jerez de la Frontera. The SDS promotion video has shots of the students dancing. Victoria Ramos was the organizer of this event. Congratulations to all who took part as there were dancers from all over the world.



NEWS FROM GREECE

To close the school year there was a beautiful show at the Bloomsbury Theatre in London on the 16th of July, presented as a tribute to our late President Dame Marina Keet. Two bursary winners from Greece, Vasiliki Stamatogianni and Mandalena Arapoglou took part in this unique event and it was a wonderful experience for them. Their teacher Artemis Dimou was one of the guest artists together with the fabulous Christina Otero (Spain), Vasileos Skepetaris (Greece), and last but not least the star of the show, Inmaculada Ortega. The event was organized by Nuria Garcia and the SDS UK and European Committee.



NEWS FROM: Jordan & Turkey



Now that the COVID-19 restrictions have been globally reduced, we can finally live normally without masks and fear. We are free to teach, dance, travel, and dream again without restrictions. Personally, I feel grateful for having the opportunity to travel and teach again in person.

My first stop was in Jordan; a historical country with magnificent ancient monuments and thrilling archaeological sites. The people were incredibly hospitable and friendly.

They accepted SDS classes with joy and eagerness to learn. Ms. Lara Darwazah the organizer for Jordan was obliging, punctual and organized with the lessons. Thank you is not enough. My gratitude, honor, and pleasure to teach in Jordan, is huge, as well as my love to teach and organize the examination session in Turkey.

Looking back to 2010 when I taught the first flamenco seminar in Izmir, I have only good memories and experiences to share. Amiable and friendly people, with whom I had the honor and the opportunity to share my knowledge.

After many seminars from 2010 until 2014, I felt that the time had come for them to try to expand their knowledge by starting the SDS training. Although the castanet parts made it a bit difficult for them, with persistence, love, and frequent practice, they passed their first exam and I managed to organize the first SDS exam session in Izmir. Although Izmir center attempted the second examination session with great success, in 2018, time froze after the pandemic break out, so we continued the lessons online.

After working hard during the pandemic and when restrictions were lifted, I managed to arrange exams in Izmir in 2022, and after many discussions and workshops, I finally established three SDS centers in Turkey, and welcomed to the big family of Spanish Dance Society, Izmir, İstanbul and Ankara. Exams took place in May 2023. Our first stop, with the guest examiner, Mr. Vassilis Skepetaris, was in Izmir. Mr. Skepetaris arrived in Alsancak, located in the center of Izmir, and came directly to find me in the school while I was practicing with my students.

We had a fantastic time before, during and after exams. The director of the school, who is my student and friend as well, Mrs. Ebru Çavuşoğlu was amiable and helpful, taking us out for dinner and showing us the beautiful town of Izmir. The examination went smoothly, following the timetable according to the program, having fun, and seeing enthusiastic faces begin their exams. Spiros, my fiancé, was generous, arranging the music and fortunate enough to watch the outstanding performances. Mr. Skepetaris and I continued our trip to Ankara.

Even though our trip on the bus was long, we enjoyed spending time together, talking about our youthful dancing years, since we had been friends from a young age. We arrived in Ankara and Buse, a kind student, took us to the hotel. Exams took place in the wonderful dancing school of Mrs. Kerime Kartaloglu, in a warm and friendly environment. After the exams, Mrs. Kartaloglu and the girls arranged a delicious dinner and an exciting party for us. We danced the Sevillanas and Rumbas, and the girls sang and danced for us traditional Turkish and Oriental songs.

Returning to Greece, we were both grateful and incandescently happy for the amazing time and hospitality in beautiful Turkey. Thank you all for making our time pleasant and for the wonderful memories! We are looking forward to coming back! Thank you, Ms. Conchita del Campo and the SDS, for supporting the new centers. Thank you, Mr. Skepetaris, for the unforgettable time we had together.

With respect,
Katerina Voulgari





News from:

MALTA


Summer, 2023

It has been quite eventful on the Flamenco and Spanish Dance scene in Malta this academic year

We welcomed Penelope Whiting back in December 2022 to complete her tour of Malta. She examined some of my pupils as well as one of my teachers, Giulia Aquilina's young ladies and students of Renée Saliba and Sara Bianchi. Congratulations to Erika Farrugia Grungo on passing her IdB 1 (teacher Deborah McNamara)

In April 2023 Cristina Otero gave an exceptional course on some of the new SDS dances. The students completed the Tientos, Alegrias, Caña and Tangos in 4 days. Congratulations to all the students who attended and learned the work in record time.

We also held a beautiful Homenaje for the late Sherrill Wexler where Maltese artists (SDS and non SDS), students and teachers came to pay their last respects and performed with love and passion. It was really quite touching. Our guest artists Angel Muñoz and Charo Espino and their daughter Maria were an absolute joy to watch on stage and to socialise with too. So humble, loving and giving. Virginia Domínguez from Conservatorio profesional de Danza Fortea, Madrid, brought two outstanding young men from the conservatory who dazzled the audience with their exceptional technique and flair. We even had Alumni from Elmhurst Ballet school, a big part of Sherrill's life, performing the iconic piece Flamenco Rock and Fenella Barker from the Uk. Theo Dantes was our guest of honour as Sherrill's best friend. We were delighted that Gary and Cheryl White were present in the audience



In June Mu Danza Boleras was held at the Manoel Theatre with a new cast. It was brought to Malta by the Sharon Sapienza Foundation. The show, as expected, was outstanding. It was wonderful to recognise the Escuela repertoire, which we are fortunate enough to be taught in our syllabus and painstakingly codified by Marina Keet for prosperity.

In June Alejandro Gomez organised the Flamenco Festival. All the Maltese schools participated. Eleni Giannopoulou was also an invited guest artist and stunned us with her superb dancing.



Eleni returned the following week to examine students of Bettina Von Brockdorff, Sara Bianchi, Marisha Bonnici and Svetlana Silina. It was lovely catching up with Eleni. We couldn't believe so much time had flown since we last saw each other in Greece but I promised to return, hopefully to examine in Greece once again.

In July, two young students of Giulia Aquilina attended Fama Flamenca in Jerez and bursary winner Gaia Magri attended the SDS summer school in the UK which culminated in a stunning performance at the Bloomsbury Theatre in London to celebrate the life of Dame Marina Keet.

Our year is not quite over yet. We are looking forward to Katerina Voulgari's visit in September. Katerina and Lilia Gingell will be giving a 3 day workshop. The SDS brings so much joy and passion to our lives. We hope to invite different teaching members to Malta, every September for inspiring open work classes and of course international seminars in Easter to learn the new stunning SDS dances. All members are welcome. We hope to see some of you next year.

Wishing you all the best of luck for the new academic year.

Deborah Caruana
Malta





News from: **ROME**



As we do every year, we like to prepare a show for the Dia Internacional de Danza on the 29th of April and were busy with rehearsals.

Later on, in the beginning of July with the Teachers in Sicily: Cettina Pandolfo, Daniela Perrone and her assistant Paola Penna, we organised a fantastic revision and up-dating course of the new Vocational Programme of Study mentored by Vassilis Skepetaris from Athens.

Vassilis was an enormous help and his excellent teaching was so clear, intense and generous during these 4 days, so we had a great time together besides coping with the heat of 39°C.

This photo (right), is of the first Ingreso exam in Rome (1974) with myself, Marina and Susana Maraleda. Mavis Becker examined us in Marina and Mikael's house in Casalpalocca. Conchita invited me to attend the London Gala celebrating the life of my beloved teacher, Marina.



In the middle of July, a flight again, this time to London to celebrate the memory of my beloved teacher Marina Keet who was the one who introduced me to the Spanish Dance Society 45 years ago in Rome. Conchita had kindly arranged my stay and given me a ticket to the London Gala, which was moving, spectacular and an extraordinary event. It was wonderful to see so many dancers on stage - presenting such lovely choreographies. It was also so nice to again see so many people from the SDS and especially to be able to hug Mikael and their daughter, Vicky.

-MARIA LUISA IHRE /ORGANISER FOR ITALY



NEWS FROM: SICILY

BY CETINA PANDOLFO

This year the SDS exam session conducted by the examiner Vassilis Skepetaris was very successful.

He appreciated the commitment and presentation of the new Programmes of Study and he awarded a bursary to one of the candidates.

From 9th to the 11th of July, Vassilis himself conducted a syllabus revision in Pedara, during which he satisfied all our requests with great professionalism. Vassilis was generous, professional and very clear in his explanations.



I was happy to be able to represent the SDS in a show 'A MI MANERA' that took place August the 8th in Trecastagni, wherein I directed a piece called "Il Duende del Mediterraneo".

I thank Conchita del Campo and Maria Luisa Ihre for their support and availability.



...SICILY

BY: GRAZIA MAUGERI

Last year we finally resumed our life put on "standby" by Covid, and we started dancing again.

In the summer of 2022, my students and I were invited to participate in the "TEATRI DI PIETRA" festival, as a corps de ballet in the opera "CARMEN", together with the dancers of the BALLEET ESPAÑOL DE MURCIA directed by the choreographer MATILDE RUBIO. We danced our Carmen in the most prestigious theaters of our territory: the Ancient Theater of Taormina, the Grego Theater of Syracuse, and the Archaeological Park of Tindari. Flamenco has also awakened in other areas, and I participated as a flamenco dancer in the videoclip for the pianist JosephLu entitled "MIRAGGIO ANDALUSO" and the picto-sculptress Giusy Mintendi. My students participated in the dance festival CRISTALLI DI EMOZIONI together with the most beautiful local dance schools. The dance lessons in September 2022 resumed at full speed, confirming my collaborations with the various schools, and inserting new ones. Many new students have approached me and let themselves be conquered by flamenco, a wonderful dance that attracts young and old.





A certain curiosity was also manifested from a strictly cultural point of view because I was invited by the Carlo Gemellaro Institute of Catania to be a speaker for a conference entitled ENCUESTRO FLAMENCO.

I also assisted one of my students of the National Academy of Dance in Rome in the drafting of her thesis: The Universality of the Spanish character in dance: from folklore to the present day.

In April I participated in the Flamenco Course organized by Deborah MacNamara in MALTA with the beautiful CRISTINA OTERO. Three fantastic days in which I regenerated, and I was able to hug friends and colleagues I hadn't really seen for a long time.

May was a month full of commitments and emotions. First the exams of the SDS in which my students, big and small, gave the best of themselves giving me great satisfaction. Then the cursillo with the teacher Matilde Rubio (Conservatorio Superior de Danza Angel Pericet de Malaga) organized in my school. Finally, the workshop that I organized together with guitarist Carmine Nucho Nobile and percussionist Gabriele Gagliarini, entitled THE RHYTHMS OF FLAMENCO.

At the end of June, we had our end-of-year show where all my students had the opportunity to demonstrate what they learned during this year of study full of content and emotions. And they also participated in the Gala "FRAMMENTI DI DANZA" in July.



Examiner feedback...Sicily & Turkey

VASSILIS SKEPETARIS

Italy, Sicily May 2023

It was my pleasure to be in Catania for the second time as an examiner and to meet the excellent teachers Daniela, Cettina and Grazia again. Grazia kindly picked me up from the airport and took me to the Etna hotel, which shared its name with the famous Etna volcano. We then went on a tour near the sea and enjoyed delicious Italian pizza. The next day, the examinations began with Grazia's students, who showcased a high level of skill in Grades and Vocational levels. In the afternoon, I visited Daniela's school, where all the students were well-prepared across various levels. The following day, I examined Cettina's students, who had mastered most of the new choreographies from the Vocational syllabus. Throughout the examination period, Maria Luisa Ihre, the excellent organizer from Italy, maintained constant communication with me to ensure that everything ran smoothly. The collaboration between the three teachers and Maria Luisa Ihre resulted in a well-prepared and successful examination period. I would like to express my gratitude to all of them. I had a fantastic time.

Turkey, Izmir and Ankara May 2023

I had a wonderful time during my trip to Turkey for the second year in a row. It was great to reconnect with my childhood friend and excellent organizer, Katerina Voulgari, who made sure everything was perfectly organized. The exams started in Izmir, where the students showcased their continued development and success. During our time in Izmir, we had the opportunity to explore Turkish bazaars, indulge in delicious food, and even visit a traditional spa. It was a truly enriching experience. Next, we traveled to Ankara, a journey that took us nine hours by bus. The exams in Ankara were also a success and it was amazing to see how the SDS has flourished in Turkey. Despite the long journey, we were filled with happiness and excitement. In Ankara, we were welcomed with great enthusiasm as it was their first time hosting exams. Their hospitality was truly heartwarming and I feel incredibly lucky to have experienced such wonderful moments. Witnessing the enthusiasm of the students taking exams for the first time was truly inspiring. Katerina Voulgari's organization skills were exceptional and I am grateful to her from the bottom of my heart for creating such memorable moments and ensuring a perfect organization. I am already looking forward to our next exams to Istanbul.

Examiner feedback...Greece

PENELOPE WHITING

My first examining tour to Greece took me to Athens and the Island of Evia in February, to examine the students of Youla Papas and Artemis Dimou. The timing was perfect because just two weeks before the Island had heavy snowfall cutting off many towns. I was excited to visit a part of Greece I had never visited before and I wasn't disappointed. The bus ride took me over the snowy mountains to finally arrive at my destination on the beautiful waterfront where the warmer temperature and calm seas were in contrast to the winter scenes I had travelled through. My stay was short but very enjoyable and before I knew it I was on my way back to Athens.

My second and longer tour took me again to Athens, which included a trip to Arta in the northwest to examine the students of Melina Tatsi, and then to the school of Kalliopi Panagopoulou in Pyrgos on the Peloponnese. Both were long bus trips but I relished in watching the changing scenery and experiencing other areas of this beautiful country.

Thank you to all the Greek teachers who presented their pupils for exams, you are all doing an amazing job, all the students were beautifully groomed and well-prepared.

Thank you also to all the students who danced their hearts out with so much joy and passion. Demonstrating so much dedication, especially the vocational students who presented some very interesting journals, some of the discussions were very knowledgeable and concise, especially considering English is not their mother tongue/language! Bravi!!!

It was lovely to get acquainted with everyone even though it was often "hello, nice to meet you and thank you" due to the busy schedule. It was a pleasure and an honour for me to join Euan Trinder for the teacher's examinations and catch up on the news! Congratulations to the successful candidates!

Thank you to my taxi driver extraordinaire Nikos who made sure I got to all my destinations on time (including getting on the correct bus, my Greek being limited to a few words, and reading Greek even less able to decipher the letters). Also thank you to all the teachers who looked after me so well and picked me up and took me back to the hotel through the sometimes heavy traffic, Athens is a busy city.

A very special thank you to Youla Papas for her meticulous planning and organizing. Everything ran like clockwork.

The SDS work is in excellent hands with you all. Just one comment, I thought I would mention, it would be nice to see more regional and escuela work presented in the exams. Keep up the excellent work. Thank you all and OLE!

Message from Examiner and Organiser, Youla Papas

As the year came to a close in December things were getting better. Greece had two exam sessions in January 2022 and various teachers needed to complete their teacher's exams in July of 2022. Victoria Ramos and Matteo Trinder examined the summer exam session.

I examined Spain in May with a heavy schedule traveling all over the country from the north of Spain – Santander right through to the south of Spain in Jerez. The climate was so cold and rainy in the north and so hot in the south. It was an amazing experience. With me were Eleni Giannopoulou and Stella Pappa who both completed their examiners training. I wish them a wonderful journey as examiners for the Society, both exceptional candidates and they did very well in their training sessions.

In 2023 we had two exam sessions with Penelope Whiting examining both sessions and joining her for the teachers' exams was Mr Matteo Trinder.

In the summer session there was a big entry from the following teachers alphabetically: Konstantina Aidoni, Lilian Bourtzia, Emily Chasioti, Artemis Dimou, Eleni Giannopoulou, Anna Girtatou, Varvara Karamplia, Olivia Katrakasi, Evangelia Katsari, Eirini Klimopoulou, Vana Mallokini, Youla Papas-Dimou, Stella Pappa, Friederiki Sarri, Vasilis Skepetaris, Melina Tatsi, Katerina Thoma, Matteo Trinder, Paschalia Tsekoura, Katerina Tsitoumi, Katerina Voulgari, Niki Zervou.





I also examined England and Scotland in July and would like to thank all the teachers for their hospitality and lovely work. Congratulations to all their students. I did quite a bit of travelling but it didn't bother me as the train rides were comfortable and the journeys were breathtaking, such beautiful scenery. The Spanish Dance Society is growing every day with new students and good strong teachers. In closing, I'd like to mention and thank the Executive Committee for their outstanding organizing in the running of the Society - Wishing everyone a wonderful and prosperous new school year of 2023 - 2024



CARMEN MARTINEZ MARTINEZ (SPAIN)

After the hard years of the pandemic, it seems that in Spain, everything is finally returning to normal. All social and cultural activities have resumed. Theaters and shows no longer have capacity limits, dance schools are back at full capacity and finally, we see each other again! Finally, we can see each other smile!!! The mandatory use of masks is over in the vast majority of spaces.

Despite the difficulties and the adaptations that we have had to make, the activity related to dance in Spain has not ceased at any time.

The adaptation process for schools and teachers has been a significant challenge. From learning to work online due to circumstances to organizing classes with small groups due to capacity limits to returning to the normality in which we find ourselves at the moment.

Throughout this period, we have continued working with enthusiasm and dedication so that learning, training, exams, and love for Spanish dance do not cease.

As a result of this, we have been able to welcome 3 new teachers who have joined the Spanish Dance Society. Vanesa Salazar Herrero, Carmen Cañas Dirube and Raúl del Río Doblás. Welcome!

On the other hand, thanks to the work and dedication of our beloved Victoria Ramos, our programming has continued to be renewed and updated during this period, adding new choreographies, dances, and exercises that have enriched and improved our teaching method at all levels.

The SDS exam sessions have not stopped during this time either. Either online, or in person when circumstances permitted.

Thanks to this, and to the efforts of both teachers and the SDS Organization, our students have been able to continue their training, growing, evolving, and improving as dancers.

This year 2023, I was lucky to be chosen to examine the whole of Spain. I would like to begin by showing my most sincere gratitude to all the teachers for the affection with which they have received me. It has been an extremely rewarding experience for me and from which I have learned something from each of you, and of course, thanks to the students who went through each of those classrooms, for showing me all the work they have learned and leaving their soul in each step. It has been a pleasure.

The adventure began in El Astillero (Cantabria), in “Nueva Escuela Danza y Pilates” with an intense day of student exams led by Carmen Cañas. A great job, with very carefully worked technique, impeccable discipline from all the students, all gorgeous with their perfectly matched coloured outfits. Thank you for making me feel at home!



On the same day, and for the first time, Raúl del Río presented his students for the SDS exams. Also a great job! Congratulations! A pleasure to see all the students dedicating themselves to every moment, taking care of their technique and transmitting all their emotion. We are sure that this is only the beginning of a long path of dance and enrichment hand in hand with the SDS.

My next stop was Cuenca. After a long train journey, there was Lola Segarra waiting for me at the station to pick me up. What a joy to meet again after so many years and also to see her sister for a few minutes. An honour to meet her mother, so hospitable and elegant, who continues to give off that halo of a dancer that the great ones never lose. It was a wonderful day of exams, enjoying the work of all her students, after which I was lucky enough to enjoy a personalised tour of Cuenca, listening raptly to the history of the city from Lola, which ended with a pleasant dinner in a beautiful restaurant with views of the famous hanging houses and the Júcar River.

The next day, very early, I headed towards Toledo, arriving at its impressive and beautiful train station, where they were already waiting to pick me up from the Merevel Music and Dance School. Once at school, the teacher Raquel García received me. What a joy to see her again too! It was wonderful to see Raquel's students, all of them at Vocational Level, with very careful work at both a technical and artistic level. After the exams we ate together some delicious rice, enjoying our talk so much and time passed so quickly that I almost missed the train to my next destination.

In Ciudad Real, where my partner and friend Esperanza de los Reyes (Chiqui for me) welcomed me to show me her small and cozy city. The next day, after a good rest, I spent the morning taking the exams at her Dance Studio. I really enjoyed watching the work of all her students, they were so determined and full of energy. After examining, my adorable Juanma (Esperanza's husband), always loving and willing, proposed a wonderful plan for us before taking the next train. They took me to see Almagro, very close to Ciudad Real, famous for its Corral de Comedias from the 17th century, the only one that remains intact from that time and where one of the most prestigious theatre festivals is held every year. There we enjoyed some good typical tapas of the area, accompanied by pleasant conversation. A million thanks to both of you!

Then from Ciudad Real to Málaga, where a very friendly driver from the Casares Town Hall was waiting for me, to travel the hour's journey to Juana M^a Gil's school, who was there waiting, as it was getting dark, to welcome me and enjoy a dinner together while sharing concerns, points of view and teaching methods. It was such a real pleasure to meet her! It was time to rest to face an intense day of exams the next day. All of Juana's students were wonderful, and you could clearly see her teaching methodology, dedication, and enthusiasm. It's a shame to have almost no time after the exams to continue talking. Surely we will have opportunities in the future. Thank you for your sympathy and hospitality!

It was time to return home since the next students to take the exam were mine, and I had to receive my dear Victoria Ramos. For the first time (because our time together is usually so tight) we were able to enjoy an afternoon together, visiting some places in Santander and debating the divine and the human. Then there were two full days of exams, from which all my students came out satisfied and happy, always making special mention of how nice and kind the examiner was, and how comfortable she had made them feel during the exam. Thanks for everything, Vicki!

It was time to travel again, this time to Valencia, also sharing the exam session with my partner and fellow examiner Esperanza de los Reyes. Sandra Sasera was waiting for us there, with her gorgeous students already prepared to start the exams. A very rewarding experience seeing all the students who did their best to demonstrate everything they had learned. Thank you, Sandra, for your hospitality and for the time we spent after the exams to catch up.

It was time to go home again and prepare for end-of-year festivals, etc., and then face the last exam session in Spain at the Centro de Baile Jerez, under the direction of Victoria Ramos. It was a real pleasure to see her students, who exuded art and passion through every pore of their skin, with excellent technical work. It was also satisfying to see that all of them were examined for the Spanish Dance Route, something that is not very common these days. Vicki has always encouraged her students to learn the Classical and Regional styles as an invaluable part of their overall Spanish Dance training. Thank you, Vicki, for your love and for always making everything so easy!

Furthermore, after the exams, another important and wonderful event related to Spanish Dance began. For another year, and with great success, "Fama Flamenco" was celebrated at the Centro de Baile Jerez. Masterclasses for all levels are taught by Marta de Troya and Pilar Ogalla. This year, as a novelty, I taught an Estilizada course and have donated the choreography to the Spanish Dance Society, to become part of the alternatives that exist in its Syllabus. All this work culminated with a beautiful show at the CajaSol Theatre in Jerez de la Frontera, which showed, among other things, everything learned during that intense week of training, coexistence, laughter, and, above all, a lot of art, on the part of all the participating students, who gave their all on the stage, making it such an enjoyable experience for everyone.

HOMENAJE – TRIBUTE TO SHERRILL WEXLER ‘MALTA 29/04/23’

**BY: CHERYL CROSSEN WHITE
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR SPANISH
DANCE SOCIETY UK AND EUROPE**

It was our privilege as SDS representatives to be able to attend this poignant and passionate Maltese tribute production to Sherrill Wexler at the Blue Box Theatre in Malta on the 29th of April.

There is a special lifelong relationship that unfolds between teacher and student which is unique, in as much as an invisible ‘baton’ encasing the knowledge and interpretation of one’s beloved subject, is passed from one to the other and that ‘baton’ will either be discarded or cherished and with time reverently and lovingly passed on to the next generation.



From the opening beats of the rhythmic ‘talón’, with the dancers in ‘Bob Fosse’ style costumes with hats and canes, (choreography by Sara Bianchi), to the iconic ‘Flamenco Rock’, (choreography by Sherrill Wexler and Dame Mavis Becker) and the heart-rending performance of ‘Desiderium’ (by Deborah Falzon), it was movingly and beautifully demonstrated by every single performer that Sherrill Wexler’s ‘baton’ of knowledge and expertise was in safe hands !

A special ‘Olé!’ goes to Guest Artistes Àngel Muñoz, Charo Espino and Maria Lopez who ‘wowed’ us with their respective, ‘Chiquilin de Bachin’, and stunningly performed, ‘A Qué Sabe La Vida.’

At half time we bumped into ‘Honorary Guest’ and co-founder of the SDS, Theo Dante’s and I waxed lyrical to him about the beautifully authentic performance of ‘Jan Galvez’ in ‘Sonata and Dance’. In the second half we were mesmerised once more by the ‘castanet virtuosity’ and classical ‘buoyancy’ of ‘Mario Minquez’ both dancers from the ‘Conservatoria Profesional de Danza Fortea’.

After the rousing ovation of the finale the personal memories, stories and anecdotes read out by students and teachers alike were a treasured and moving tribute to her legacy. Bravo Malta!

A special mention also goes to 'Lillea Gingell', who performed the beautifully choreographed classical 'Fantasia', (by Robert Scicuna and Lillea Gingell) and to Martina Attard, Nicole Caruana and Anthony Tomaselli who performed Victoria Ramos's beautifully balanced and sensually evocative, 'Tarrantos', by kind permission of the SDS.

An evening to remember for all who love Spanish Dance and wished to pay tribute to Sherrill Wexler! Thank you to Debbie McNamara for producing such a memorable evening from the Spanish Dance Society and all its members who remember the valuable contribution of Miss Sherrill Wexler, with love and gratitude!



SDS COURSE WITH CHRISTINA ORTEGA



**GALA PERFORMANCE IN TRIBUTE TO
OUR FORMER 'LIFE PRESIDENT',
DAME MARINA KEET.
VENUE: BLOOMSBURY THEATRE
LONDON.
DATE: 16TH JULY 2023**

It is with great humility and gratitude that I write this review/news item, because this was an evening in memory not only of a great dance personality but that of a great 'Lady' of the Theatre, a friend, teacher, examiner, writer and mostly a beloved wife, mother and grandmother.

The SDS UK and European Branch Committee including our wonderful Director and Organiser Conchita del Campo, Nuria Garcia Director and Event Organiser who carried the main load of the production, with Vicki Ramos our International Board Examiner alongside our Greece Organiser Youla Papas were all instrumental in helping to stage a Spanish Dance Gala Evening that consolidated the love and appreciation we all have for Marina's legacy, and also the love and appreciation the Spanish Dance Society has for its own members internationally.

Gala de Danza Española



Guest artist:

Inmaculada Ortega

An evening of Spanish and International Classical, Regional and Flamenco Dance

Bloomsbury Theatre

16th July 2023 5pm

<https://www.theatreboxoffice.org/bloomsbury-theatre>



020 3108 1000

We had all our overseas members in our hearts this evening including Sir Geoffrey Nieman our current 'Life President', Louisa Cortes (Rhoda Rivkind), Mavis Becker, Wilcarina Yeates and also Theo Dantes who we were thrilled to have in our audience. We also had support from our lovely Italian ladies Mari Luisa Ihre, and Penny Whiting one of our European examiners along with the lovely Kay Jones our teacher in Cornwall.

Special mentions also go to our Membership Liaison Officer Gary White, our lovely chairpersons Isabel Baquero White and Cheryl Liss, and our ever-positive and supportive Secretary Jackie Christie.

The guest artists who blew us away during the performance were: Inmaculada Ortega and Cristina Otero from Spain, Vassilis Skepetaris one of our examiners from Greece, the FaltrUkeiras Galician group UK, and students from the Escuela de Baile UK, Centro de Baile Jerez and the Youla Papas Dance School from Greece.

We are very grateful to the wonderful guitarist Tito Heredia, singer Tamara Tane, Cajon player Agoney Perdomo, and Palmista Carlos Barba Jimenez, for making the show so dynamic and such a success.

Thank you all for your contributions to this unique event. Muchas Gracias!

I am not going to comment on the individual artistry and expertise of any of our dancers, choreographers, teachers, or performers except to say on behalf of the 'SDS UK and Europe and Marina's husband Mikael who whispered to me at the end, "Marina would have loved it!"

We hope you will be able to enjoy this evening for yourself by watching the video together with your school.

'Gala de Danza Española' is available for purchase from the online SDS store. Please contact info@spanishdancesociety.org for a link to the store and the video which is for SDS members only.

Cheryl Crossen White, Artistic Advisor SDS UK and Europe.

CREDITS

Gala de Danza Española

Bloomsbury Theatre 16 July 2023

**Dedicated to Dame Marina Keet Grut
2nd September 1934-21st June 2022**

With special thanks:

Spanish Dance Society

Escuela de Baile

Centro de baile Jerez

FaltrUKeiras

Cristina Otero- dancer

Youla Papas Dance School

Vassilis Skepetaris - dancer

Inmaculada Ortega - special guest artist dancer

Artemis Dimou- dancer

Nuria García - director

Tito Heredia - guitar

Tamara Tane -singer

Agoney Perdomo - cajon

Bryan Reyes Rodriguez - palmas

Carlos Barba Jiménez - Palmas

EUROPEAN

BURSARY WINNERS



**We would like to congratulate
the bursary winners from:**

GREECE:

Artemis Dimou's Vasiliki Stamatogianni
Katerina Voulgari's Melina Tatsi

MALTA:

Sara Bianchi's Mattea Bianchi
Deborah McNamara's Gaia Magri
Svetlana Silina's Nicole Jessica Caruana

SICILY:

Cettina Pandolfo's Gaia Simomi
Daniela Perrone's Paola Patane

SPAIN

Carmen Martinez's Arantxa Izquierdo Laya
Victoria Ramos' Lucia Carrillo Medina
Esperanza de los Reyes' Jimena Osorio
Rodriguez

TURKEY:

Katerina Voulgari's Gozde Arik from Ankara
and Ebru Cavusoglu Guvencalen from Izmir.

UNITED KINGDOM

Nuria Garcia's Valentina Mameli
Fernandez





President's Award 2023

This prestigious award is presented to:

Vasileios Skepetaris

For his dedication and excellent I.T. support

Spanish Dance Society

APRIL 2023

Sir Geoffrey Neiman
SIR GEOFFREY NEIMAN
(HONORARY LIFE PRESIDENT)



President's Award 2023

This prestigious award is presented to:

Youla Papas Dimou

For Outstanding Organisational Skills

Spanish Dance Society

APRIL 2023

Sir Geoffrey Neiman
SIR GEOFFREY NEIMAN
(HONORARY LIFE PRESIDENT)



**IN TRIBUTE TO FORMER HON. LIFE PRESIDENT: DAME MARINA KEET DE GRUT.
HONOURED WITH MEDALS BY KING JUAN CARLOS I AND FELIPE VI OF SPAIN.**

*Celebrating more than 50 years of its unique
teaching method.*

- Annual Graded and Vocational examinations on five continents.
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**information: info@spanishdancesociety.org
www.spanishdancesociety.org**
