

Now in its 9th year, the Dance School of the Year Awards was founded by Anne Walker MBE to celebrate the achievements of dance schools who so often do not receive the recognition they deserve. 2021 saw the largest ever number of entries. Dance teachers provide so much more than just a dance lesson, offering support and discipline and teaching young people how to work as part of a group that relies on each other. The Covid-19 Pandemic has shown just how important dance teachers are in the lives of a large proportion of the population. Dance teachers everywhere took to technology to support their students mental and physical well-being by offering online classes as well as moral support while the world was stranded at home.

The finalists of this prestigious award have just been announced and we at the Wendy Sandercock Academy of Dance are thrilled to be one of the shortlisted schools.

Finalists represent schools of all sizes and all genres from ballet to hip-hop and ballroom to contemporary. Entries were received from across the UK and Europe as well as Canada, Ireland, USA, Bahrain, Malaysia, Finland, India and Australia and were in five categories:

- Up to 100 students
- 100-150 students
- 151-250 students
- 251-350 students
- Over 350 students

As well as an Overall Winner plus bronze, silver and gold winners in each category, there are also special Awards this year supported by several of the dance Awarding Bodies:

ABD Award for Community Services to Dance

Association of Russian Ballet and Theatre Arts Award for Outstanding Achievement in Classical Ballet

The John Travis Award For Accessibility to Dance. Supported by bbodance

BDTA Award for Outstanding Contribution to Student Wellbeing Through Dance

IDTA Award for Artistic Endeavour

ISTD Award for Innovation in the Teaching of Dance Supported by Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing

NATD Award for the Inspirational School Involved in Developing and Nurturing New Professionals

Project B Award for Innovation in Male Dance supported by Royal Academy of Dance

Also, this year will see a Special Award presented to the dance school who has shown Innovation during the Covid-19 Pandemic. The Award ceremony will be held on 29th October and will be preceded by a Devon Cream Tea where the delegates will receive their finalist certificate.

Trophies are awarded to winners of all categories as well as various certificates and other gifts donated by the sponsors.

Anne Walker MBE, a former dance teacher who has founded and run a number of dance businesses and is now a business mentor and author, created these Awards to celebrate this incredible industry. She says: “Dance teachers should be applauded and celebrated. So much more than just a teacher – they are almost a substitute parent to many of their students as they are role models, mentors and social workers, offering support, stability and a disciplined approach to life.

Fellow dance teachers have supported me in my career over many years and now I hope, through these Awards, we can all celebrate the life-long passion for dance and the achievements of dance teachers everywhere.”

Please contact Wendy Sandercock on 07702 416723 for further details