



Dancers' Career Development Bursary Recipient Profile

Name: Jane Butler

DCD Bursary received: Acting for Others Recipient 2011

Previous occupation: Jane was an independent dancer, dance teacher, & choreographer involved in various projects including work with Freddie Opoku-Addaie, Ironinc, and Feeder. Jane performed in The Place Prize finals 2006, and was a shortlisted Place Prize choreographer. Her choreography was shown at venues and schools in the UK and Germany as part of Kush Dance.

Retraining: Jane is studying on the MA Acting course at ARTS ED.



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How did you find out about the DCD Bursaries and why did you apply?

I found out about the bursaries in 2008 shortly after my accident, which left me, at that time, struggling with two walking sticks. I visited the DCD offices and was given supportive and down to earth advice on considering a new career and how to gently move forwards from the position I found myself in. Part of this support included free counselling as well as personality testing in order to pinpoint some career options and areas that were likely to suit my needs, character and lifestyle. The counselling, personality testing, and general support and advice, were invaluable to me. They gave me the reassurance I needed, not only to consider new possibilities but also to feel grounded and safe to try things out and give myself the space and respect to refrain from rushing into something to fill the void. I applied myself more specifically to different courses and ideas including 'Writing for Children', 'Gardening', 'Singing', and 'Journalism', and was therefore able to be certain when I began multiple Acting courses at CityLit, that Acting was for me, it ticked all the boxes, and I knew in my gut I could commit myself to it long term. I applied to eight of the top drama schools in London to further my training, and was lucky to gain a place at Arts Ed, so immediately applied to DCD for the first time, now sure of what I wanted to do. Everything suddenly slotted into place!

What has been the best thing to come out of the Bursary so far?

Despite my determination to pursue Acting, without the help from DCD, and The Bridge Educational Trust, I may not have been able to complete the training. Prior to hearing I had been successful in gaining the Bursary, I only had access to the funds to complete the first term. Now I feel able to absorb myself in my studies. But, most importantly, for me, after a long period of turmoil, doubt and isolation, being successful with the Acting for Others Bursary, means more than finance and figures. The best thing to come out of the Bursary is that I feel supported in my decision - in my new career. I feel believed in, encouraged, and that gives me strength and confidence to embrace my new future!

What is your advice for people applying for future Special Bursaries?

Whatever circumstances lead you to need to change your career, and however urgent it may feel, do allow yourself plenty of transitional time to consider all your options, so that you make decisions for the right reasons. You may find something you've never considered before is actually something that makes you very happy. Before my accident I never thought in my wildest dreams that I would become an actor, and had always gravitated towards dance because I had trouble expressing myself vocally, but I have never been happier! Take advantage of the specialist help at the DCD, communicate with them, ask questions and really listen to the advice they have to offer. Also, once you're sure of what you want to do and how you'll do it, it is important to be proactive - apply for other funding at the same time, this will help empower you, and make your application more realistic and viable to support, particularly if your overall costs exceed the bursary amount. Either way, be sure to include details of all other applications and your decision-making in a positive light within your application. Speak from your heart!

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What's next?

I will graduate from ARTS ED. in September 2012. After performing graduation shows in July and a West End showcase in September, I hope to graduate with interest from an agent. Ideally I'd love to focus on film, but would also love to work in theatre -I enjoy Acting so much, I will cherish whatever comes my way!