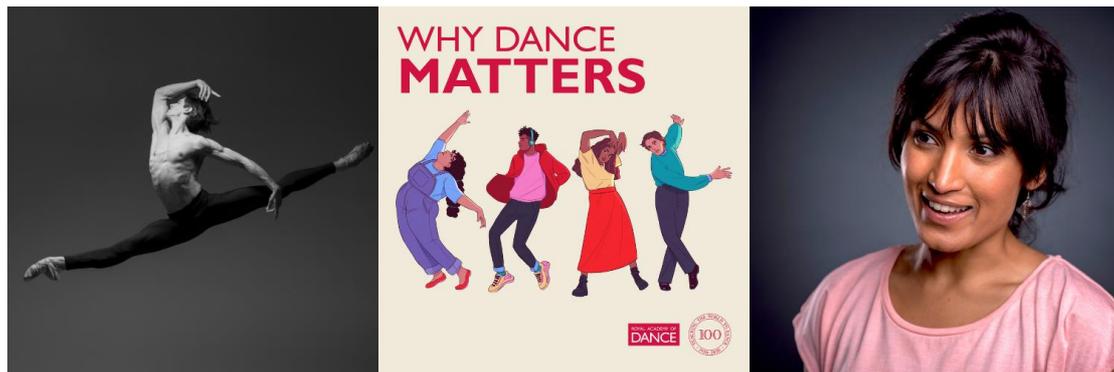


Royal Academy of Dance launches new podcast 'Why Dance Matters' with host of remarkable guests from the world of dance and beyond



Credit L to R: Xander Parish, photo by Darian Volkova, Why Dance Matters artwork by Bex Glendining and Dr Guddi Singh, photo by Simon Roth.

- Calling on 100 years' experience inspiring the world to dance, Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) today launches a new podcast '**Why Dance Matters**' with an interview with star dancer **Xander Parish**.
- **Hosted by David Jays**, arts journalist and Editor of *Dance Gazette*, this new podcast invites remarkable people from the world of dance and beyond to explore 'Why Dance Matters'.
- Guests in the first series include: Director of *Bend it like Beckham* **Gurinder Chadha**, **Dr Guddi Singh** from the BBC's *Trust me I'm a Doctor*, **Phil Chan**, co-founder of Final Bow for Yellowface and **Céline Gittens**, Principal Dancer with Birmingham Royal Ballet.
- **The first series will run for eight weeks from today, Wednesday 19 May**, and will be available via the RAD website, as well as via [Spotify](#), [Apple](#), [Google Podcasts](#) and [Amazon Music](#).
- For further information visit: www.royalacademyofdance.org/podcast

19 May 2021: As the Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) continues to mark its centenary, celebrating 100 years in which it shaped the future of dance training, the Academy today launched a new podcast examining 'Why Dance Matters'. As dancers return to studios, and stages are set for performances once again, this question has never been more relevant. In the face of a global pandemic, the RAD has seen first-hand the vital role that dance has played in connecting communities, lifting our spirits and keeping our bodies and minds active. Hosted by David Jays, editor of RAD's magazine *Dance Gazette*, this podcast presents a series of conversations with remarkable people from the world of dance and beyond, tracing the impact of dance on guests' lives and asking 'why dance matters' to them – and why it might matter to us all.

The first series explores how dance could help to transform the NHS and enhance wellbeing with **Dr Guddi Singh**, as well as the impact of dance on communities facing challenging

situations in Mexico with RAD Teacher **Victoria Trevino**. Film director **Gurinder Chadha OBE** takes a moment to celebrate not only the UK's return to cinemas but the performing arts generally, offering a unique view on the impact of dance on her life and career. We ask eminent dancers **Xander Parish** and **Céline Gittens**, who both took their first steps in ballet with the RAD, for their professional perspectives, and explore racial stereotypes in dance with **Phil Chan**, co-founder of Final Bow for Yellowface. As the Academy prepares to move to a new purpose built home for dance later this year, RAD Chief Executive **Luke Rittner CBE** shares his views on how a building can be a catalyst for change. Last but by no means least, acclaimed choreographer **Cathy Marston**, whose ballet *The Cellist* was the last premiere at The Royal Ballet before lockdown, completes the line-up. She speaks to David Jays as her work is included in a new book co-edited by a member of RAD's academic staff.

David Jays who hosts Why Dance Matters says: *'It has been a privilege to sit with our remarkable guests – dancers and non-dancers alike – to hear why dance matters to them. I'm speaking to ballerinas, choreographers and dance teachers – but also to people who find that dance informs their work, whether it's in healthcare, activism or other artforms. In 'Why Dance Matters', the RAD makes a vital connection between dance and the things that we all care most deeply about.*

'When we began these conversations, I had no idea how personal, poignant and inspiring they would be – more than one of our guests has told me that dance saved their lives. I hope that both people who are steeped in dance and also resolute non-dancers will find these conversations as engaging and enlightening as I have done.'

Series 1 Line-up

Episode 1: Xander Parish, Principal Dancer with the Mariinsky Ballet, Wednesday 19 May

Episode 2: Gurinder Chadha OBE, director, producer and writer, Wednesday 26 May

Episode 3: Choreographer Cathy Marston, Wednesday 2 June

Episode 4: Victoria Trevino, RAD Teacher located in Mexico City, Wednesday 9 June

Episode 5: Phil Chan, activist, author and co-founder of Final Bow for Yellowface, Wednesday 16 June

Episode 6: Dr Guddi Singh, paediatrician, health campaigner and broadcaster, Wednesday 23 June

Episode 7: Céline Gittens, Principal Dancer with Birmingham Royal Ballet, Wednesday 30 June

Episode 8: Luke Rittner CBE, Chief Executive of RAD, Wednesday 7 July

The first episode, a conversation with Xander Parish, is available today, Wednesday 19 May. The podcast will be available to listen from the RAD website, as well as Apple, Spotify,

Google and Amazon Music, with a new episode available each week for the next eight weeks. To read more visit www.royalacademyofdance.org/podcast

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Images available to download [here](#). Password 'whydancematters'.

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Notes to Editors

About the Royal Academy of Dance

Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) is one of the most influential dance education and training organisations in the world with a strong global membership in 85 countries. Established in 1920 to improve standards and re-invigorate dance training, the Academy helps and encourages its teachers to perfect their teaching skills and pass on this knowledge to their students. There are currently over 1,000 students in full-time or part-time teacher training programmes with the Academy and each year the examination syllabus is taught to thousands of young people worldwide, with around a quarter of a million pupils per year going on to take RAD exams.

About David Jays, host

David Jays writes for the Guardian and Sunday Times, and is editor of Dance Gazette, the Royal Academy of Dance magazine. [@mrdavidjays](#)

About Sarah Myles, producer

Sarah Myles is an award winning podcast producer with nearly 10 years of experience in audio. Previous podcasts Fearne Cotton's Happy Place, UK Youth's Are You Convinced?, How to Own the Room with Viv Groskop and The Week's podcast The Week Unwrapped.

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