

DANCE CLASS

by

Clive Duncan

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Hello there,

Have you watched “**Dancing Stars**”? Perhaps even voted by phone or SMS? Got angry when your favourite didn’t get enough votes?

What are your immediate thoughts when you hear “Dance Class”? (tick if applicable)

- A ballroom dancing class – learning how to waltz, boogie, tango?
- A ballet class – the dancers in tutus, hair tightly pulled back, wearing their pointed shoes?
- Folk dancing, as in Polka, Highland Reels, Tarantella, Czardas, Square or Line Dance?
- Aerobic jazz dance workouts?
- Samba parades like the Carneval in Rio?
- Cool clubbing chill-outs?
- Circle dance in kindergarten?
- Therapeutic dancing?
- Religious dancing?
- War dances of Native Americans?
- Animals’ mating dances? Or ... what else?

Non-verbal communication through movement and gestures – one of the oldest rituals in the world. It is not restricted to humans, either. Hey, don’t worry, I’m not going to give you a biology or sociology class now, just think about it!

Dancing is communication, **people making contact**, finding ways to each other - through bodily movements, through swaying and rocking. The effect is the same for all ages and (most) physiques: having fun, enjoying themselves – in different ways, each to their own.

For a lot of people it is even more: the joy of being alive and in harmony within oneself, the feeling of physical and emotional well-being.

Those of you who are aware of their preferred **learning style** might know that they are ‘**kinesthetic**’ – kinesthetic learners like, no, **need** movement in order to learn efficiently and effectively. They are usually good at any kind of sport, they are fit, athletic and aware of their bodies. Physical or emotional ‘movement’ (kinesthetics need **action and emotion**) is instrumental for storing content in their memories!

Therefore, **fun** is not only laughing at a joke or having a good time – fun is **opening the mind** to learn more effectively – and communicate with others. Just think of the UK and the USA, where sports and PE is very high up on the list of priorities in most school, college and university curricula, following the classic ‘**mens sana in corpore sano**’ principle.

As you watch (or work through) the play, you'll meet four young people, each of whom is bogged down with problems. This, in turn, affects their performance at school, which in turn affects their behaviour, their way of communicating with the people around them – the way they come across to their parents, teachers, fellow students, friends. Sadly, they seem caught in this **downward spiral**, unable to communicate their problems to others, unable to get clear about themselves. Until ... one of the teachers realizes the potential within them and helps them to release it.

Ms Gordon cares, **respects the teenagers for the persons they are** – yet she very clearly communicates to them that their behaviour, their academic performance, is unacceptable. Contrary to the Deputy Head, or some parents, she is not saying: your behaviour is bad, therefore you are a bad person. She helps them build up their **self-esteem**, encourages them, believes in them – and provides an opportunity to apply themselves, 'get really into it', channel their energy into positive areas, and **discover the strengths within** them.

Dancing as therapeutic, educational measure – this play shows in an impressive way the difference it made to our four protagonists. Could it make a difference ... to **you**?

Obviously there is a lot of background reading on the subject – if you're interested, surf through the internet, or find books, either academic (psychology, sociology, etc.) or more popular (like "Ballroom Dancing for Idiots" or some such). The message will be the same: **communication, making contact through movement!**

So ... one, two, three, stretch, stretch, tap, tap, and bend
... and back, two, three, stretch, stretch, tap, tap ...
(... ouch, I ache all over, I think I'll sit the next one out!)

As always, enjoy the play – and do let us know if you liked it.
(schooltours@englishtheatre.at)

We look forward to hearing from you,

Cheers,

Helena Hirsch

Note to teachers:

There are some straightforward comprehension questions at the end of the text just to check overall understanding. More exploitation strategies, vocabulary work and plenty of activities for your students to put their competencies and language skills to work can be found in the extensive worksheet (available for download from www.schooltours.at as from September 2014).

CHARACTERS IN THE PLAY:

Tree

Liz

Gavin

Julie

As these four are telling the story, they also play:

Miss Gordon

The Dancers

Jack, Tree's stepfather

The Deputy Head

The lads in the class

Cinema staff

Musical notes ...

- The music used for the dances in this play are contemporary rock and *not* classical.
- The two longer raps are underscored with sampling (= *taking brief segments of sound (from a song, movie or elsewhere) and using that sound to form another sound or musical piece.*

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The acting area is empty except for four chairs which are placed back in front of the backdrop. On each of these chairs is a baseball cap and a pair of sunglasses. Beneath one of the chairs is some form of sound system.

Four people, two boys and two girls, appear. They are dressed casually. They go to the chairs and, using the seats of the chairs as drums, begin to beat an orchestrated rhythm. It's lively and vibrant.

One of them, Tree, walks slowly downstage - his attitude showing defiance, cheek¹. There's an attempt to be cool. It all looks a little menacing². He does not smile and he looks at the audience, weighing them up³ for a moment.

The music stops abruptly and the other three come downstage to join Tree -

TREE: I'm Tree. It's not my real name. I don't like my real name, so everyone calls me Tree. This is my school. It's all right, if you like that sort of thing. I don't. I can't wait to leave. I live with my Mum and ... stepfather. Jack, his name is. We've reached this agreement⁴, me and Jack; I hate him and he hates me. I can't wait to leave there either...

LIZ: I'm Liz. I'm new here. I only moved to this town six months ago when my dad got a different job. I miss my friends and I want to go home. I'm lonely. I don't fit in this school. I'm a fish out of water.

GAVIN: I'm Gavin. I like it here. I mean: school. I don't mean lessons – Maths and History and Geography and French and Science. I like the people. I don't mean the teachers, although some are okay. I mean people like Tree. He's a great bloke. That's the problem. The teachers say...

TREE/LIZ/JULIE:(*rapping*)

He's a sad boy, a mad boy
A player and a bad boy
Bring you more trouble
Than you never ever had boy
When it comes to friends
Gotta be a better chooser
'Cos you stick around with him
And you'll always be the loser

¹ Herausforderung, Unverschämtheit

² gefährlich, bedrohend

³ abschätzen

⁴ wir haben dieses Abkommen (Übereinkunft)

GAVIN: But Tree's been a good friend to me. My mother, my Mum, she's very busy. She has to work all the time. Ever since Dad died. And when she gets home, she's very tired. I wish she could be at home more. When I get home there's no one there. That's why I like coming here. Tree's cool, he's fun, he's alive, he's a joker, he's off the wall, he's left field¹, he's...

TREE: Be quiet, Gavin.

GAVIN: Sorry, Tree.

JULIE: My name is Julie.

There is a moment's pause. The others, as one, turn their heads to look at Julie, expecting her to say more. Julie shrugs.

TREE: I'm in the same class as Gavin. The other two ... they're in the same year, different classes. The one on the end, I think she's a bit ... (*he screws his forefinger into his temple*²). She doesn't say much. The other one, she hasn't been here very long. I've never really spoken to her. She looks ... good.

GAVIN: (*Wolf-whistles*³)

TREE: Gavin!

LIZ: I don't know these people. Don't think I want to.

JULIE: (*Shrugs*)

TREE: We're in ...

TREE/LIZ/GAVIN/JULIE: Detention⁴!

GAVIN: We've all got to stay behind ...

LIZ: When school has finished ...

TREE: As a punishment. Me? I dared to challenge authority. I cheeked an elder⁵. I spoke rudely and defiantly to the History teacher. She said; (*he becomes the history teacher*) Today, we are going to look at the events leading up to and causing the downfall of the Holy Roman Empire⁶. I said: Why? She said: What? I said: What has that got to do with my life? She couldn't tell me. That's why I'm here.

GAVIN: And I laughed. That's why I'm here.

LIZ: I didn't hand in my Biology homework on time. I thought we had Biology tomorrow. I'm not used to the timetable yet. That's why I'm here.

There's nothing from Julie. The other three, as one, turn their heads to look at her. Julie blows a large bubble with her bubble gum.

TREE/LIZ/GAVIN: (*rapping*)

Whatcha doin'⁷, girl? (Whatcha doin', girl?)

Is that gum in your mouth? (Are you chewin', girl?)

¹ er ist witzig, dynamisch, ein irrer Typ, verrückt, übercool

² sich an die Stirn tippen (eig.: den Finger an der Schläfe drehen)

³ (nach)pfeifen

⁴ nachsitzen

⁵ ich war unverschämt zu einem Vorgesetzten (Erwachsenen)

⁶ Heiliges Römisches Reich

⁷ (sl.) what are you doing

Hey now you're in trouble, don't know that it's a rule
It's a instant detention if your chewin' in school
So you'd better not blow those bubbles no more –
You better spit it out quick before I count to four
One... two....
Julie spits the gum out ...
Uh oh!! ... Miss! She spat it on the floor!

LIZ: Today, detention is being held ...

GAVIN: Here ...

LIZ: In the Gym. With Miss Gordon. The PE teacher.

TREE: We like her. She's cool.

LIZ: She's nice.

GAVIN: She won't make us do our homework or give us lines to write.

JULIE: Yeah.

TREE: So, it's cool.

LIZ: Cool.

GAVIN: Cool.

JULIE: Cool!

TREE: Well, it should have been cool.

TREE/LIZ/GAVIN/JULIE: But it wasn't.

LIZ: As soon as she arrived she started on us¹.

JULIE: She said ... (*Julie becomes Miss Gordon*) You four again. Why are you in detention so often? Liz, this is your fifth time this term.

LIZ: It's because I'm new here. I haven't got used to things yet.

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: You've been here two terms now. If you're not used to things, it's because you don't want to get used to them.

LIZ: Yes, Miss.

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: As for you, Tree – you make me despair.

TREE: Yes, Miss.

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: And Gavin. You're just as bad.

GAVIN: Yes, Miss.

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: Don't "yes miss" me! Do you think I'm stupid? You get into trouble, for whatever reason and you're sent here as a punishment. And whatever I say to you you're going to reply; yes miss, no miss, please miss, sorry miss, until I leave you alone. Don't you think I know that trick? Don't you think I used that trick when I was your age?

TREE/LIZ/GAVIN: Yes, Miss!

JULIE: *Giggles as Julie - and then as Miss Gordon*: Julie – stop giggling! That's better. Listen. When I found out you were all in detention again, I looked up

¹ loslegen

your school records. The thing is, when you come to my class, here in the Gym or out on the field, you all work hard. You try your best. You enjoy yourselves. But your records show that you are often late for school, often absent, often in detention. Your exam results are ... not very good. I don't understand this, because I see bright, energetic young people¹ in front of me. You're not stupid, not even you, Gavin. You're not bad. Some of the teachers think you're lazy. I don't. I think you're bored.

TREE: We all agreed.

TREE/LIZ/GAVIN/JULIE: (*rapping*)

I am bored, he is bored, she is bored, and we,
We're all bored, 'cos this is boring, BORING - totally!
Boring lessons, boring teachers and especially
The chronically dull and boring chronicals of Roman History
Don't know what History did for the Romans
But it's boring the pants of me².

GAVIN: Miss Gordon said...

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: You need something to wake you up to a whole new world³, something to broaden your horizons⁴ ...

TREE: Tickets to a football match!

LIZ: A fashion show!

JULIE: A trip to the sea!

GAVIN: Are we going to have a party, Miss?

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: I've got two friends...

LIZ: Miss Gordon said...

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: They are professional dancers, but they also teach, take workshops. I've asked them to come into school to teach you ... Dance.

TREE/LIZ/GAVIN/JULIE: Dance?

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: Dance.

TREE: We laughed.

All four fall about laughing at the very idea⁵. Gavin and Tree begin to waltz and they all laugh more. Liz disco-dances a little and they laugh even more. Julie dances a few ballet steps and they all laugh again. Then, all together, they stop.

TREE: Ah, come on, Miss, you're not serious.

JULIE: Dancing is daft⁶.

GAVIN: It's for girls.

LIZ: Not this girl.

¹ blitzgescheite, energiegeladene junge Menschen

² langweilt mich zu Tode

³ etwas, wo sich (für die Jugendlichen) eine ganz neue Welt auftut

⁴ den Horizont erweitern

⁵ schon allein die Idee, der Gedanke ...

⁶ blöd, gestört

TREE: Ah, come on, Miss, my stepfather wouldn't let me...

JULIE: I get dizzy...

GAVIN: I've got a bad leg.

LIZ: Time of the month¹.

TREE: Ah, come on, Miss! You cannot do this!

JULIE: It's not fair!

GAVIN: We'll be laughed at!

LIZ: You can't make us!

JULIE: Miss Gordon said (*as Miss Gordon:*) I don't understand the problem.

May I remind you of our trip to the theatre - when I took you all to see The London Contemporary Dance Company. You all loved it.

TREE: That was true.

They bring the chairs down and are at the theatre and we hear the music of what they are watching.

LIZ: It was a month ago. All our year² went.

GAVIN: We didn't think we'd like it ...

TREE: But we did.

JULIE: Wow!

LIZ: It's beautiful!

TREE: Look at those blokes! They've got more muscles than Thor!

GAVIN: So have the women!

JULIE: Wow!

LIZ: This is terrific!

TREE: It's incredible - see how they move...

GAVIN: Will you look at the legs on her!

TREE: We talked of nothing else on the coach journey home...

They make the coach with the chairs.

JULIE: I wish I could dance like that.

LIZ: I wish I could look that beautiful.

TREE: They were all so fit - so athletic.

GAVIN: Especially the women.

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: You see, you all enjoyed it, you all loved it...

LIZ: Watching something isn't the same as doing it.

TREE: You have to be fit, strong, an athlete...

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: You are. I've already said how dedicated³ I think you are when it comes to sport and PE.

GAVIN: But Miss Gordon, we're good at...

He and Tree play football.

TREE: To me! To me!

¹ ich habe gerade die Regel

² unser gesamtes Jahr (d.h. Jahrgang, alle Parallelklassen)

³ eifrig, mit Eifer bei der Sache

GAVIN: Tree!

Tree passes to Gavin who shoots and scores.

TREE: Goal!

LIZ: And we're good at...

She plays netball with Julie.

JULIE: To me! To me!

LIZ: Julie!

Julie passes to Liz who shoots and scores.

LIZ: Goal!

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: Exactly! Dance is like another sport. Your first class is tomorrow lunchtime, in the Gym. I'll see you then. Don't be late. Detention is over. And she left us...

They are quiet for a moment. They look at each other.

GAVIN: Are you going to go? I'm not going. Are you? I'm not.

LIZ: No.

JULIE: *(Shakes her head).*

TREE: Nor me.

GAVIN: Never.

LIZ: No way.

JULIE: *(Shakes her head).*

TREE: Negative!

They all sing/rap:

I won't dance, don't ask me.
I won't dance, don't ask me.
I won't dance, my love, with you.

I can't believe the way you're treating me
Treating me so superficially¹
It's hard enough as it is for me to see
What it really is that I want to be
You shove me in a corner – what for
Always locking me out of the door
And now you want me on the dance floor?
Well no way, Jose – 'cos for sure ...
I won't dance, don't ask me.
I won't dance, don't ask me.
I won't dance, my love, with you.

You try and manipulate the masses
You try and do the same to our classes
You can pick on² the boys and the lasses

¹ oberflächlich

² herumhacken auf

'Cos their red haired or they just wear glasses
Watch my lips, hear my voice
Give me freedom, give me a choice
Don't make a fuss – don't shout
But I'm just gonna sit this one out¹.

I won't dance, don't ask me.
I won't dance, don't ask me.
I won't dance, my love, with you.

LIZ: And did we go to the dance class?

TREE: Of course we did. We had no choice. No say in the matter².

GAVIN: But we weren't happy.

JULIE: We decided to tell them...

LIZ: We didn't need a dance class...

GAVIN: Because we know how to dance already.

TREE: So, we shuffled³ into the Gym, at lunchtime and we waited...

Music - strong and stirring⁴, heralding⁵ the arrival of the Dancers...

Julie and Gavin become the Dancers. They put on the baseball caps and the sunshades and begin to walk downstage. Physically they are very aware of themselves⁶; every movement is placed, controlled, balanced⁷. They are both very gladiatorial⁸. During this...

LIZ: And then the Dancers arrived...

TREE: They...

LIZ: Stepped...

TREE: Strode⁹ ...

LIZ: Strutted¹⁰ ...

TREE: Swaggered¹¹ ...

LIZ: Into the Gym.

TREE: The way they moved, you could tell that they knew exactly who they were...

LIZ: ...Where they were going.

¹ dankend darauf verzichten (eig.: etwas aussitzen, auslassen)

² wir hatten in dieser Angelegenheit nichts zu sagen, wir wurden nicht gefragt

³ hineinschleifen, schlurfen

⁴ intensiv und anregend

⁵ ankündigen

⁶ sie haben ein starkes Körperbewusstsein

⁷ jede Bewegung ist gezielt, kontrolliert und koordiniert

⁸ wie Gladiatoren (ein starkes, selbstbewusstes Auftreten)

⁹ mit zügigen Schritten

¹⁰ angeberischer, selbstbewusster Gang

¹¹ schreiten, stolzieren

TREE: They had presence. She was beautiful...

LIZ: So was he.

The music continues. Liz and Tree put on the baseball caps and sunglasses and become the dancers...

GAVIN: They looked mean... tough...

JULIE: They moved...

GAVIN: With attitude. With just a hint of "Don't mess with me!"¹

JULIE: They were fluid². They had fluidity and they flowed across the floor. He was beautiful...

GAVIN: So was she.

Music stops.

GAVIN: They said...

DANCERS: Hey.

TREE *as dancer*: You must be Natalie's friends.

GAVIN: Natalie?

LIZ *as dancer*: Miss Gordon.

JULIE: We're her students.

Tree rips off his baseball cap and glasses...

TREE: And look, nothing personal, but this is a waste of time³. We can dance already.

LIZ *as dancer*: Really?

TREE: She said. Her voice was deep, husky⁴, sexy.

GAVIN: It made my heart beat faster.

LIZ *as dancer*: Show me.

Music. Cheap, tinny⁵ disco music. All four dance to it. They dance until they become self-conscious⁶ and then they feel embarrassed⁷ and stop. The music stops. Gavin and Julie become the Dancers...

JULIE *as dancer*: That was ... okay ...

GAVIN *as dancer*: It's a start. Watch this.

Music - it's exciting with a strong rhythm, infectious⁸. The two dancers dance together to it. It's highly skilled and controlled⁹. Liz and Tree watch. After it's finished...

TREE: When they danced...

LIZ: ... Together...

¹ mit einem Anflug von 'mit mir nicht'

² fließend

³ das ist reine Zeitverschwendung

⁴ dunkel, heiser, erregend

⁵ dünner, blecherner Klang

⁶ Hemmungen bekommen

⁷ sich genießen

⁸ mitreißend (d.h. ein Rhythmus, dem man sich nicht entziehen kann)

⁹ sehr kunstvoll und beherrscht (unter Kontrolle)

TREE: It was like they were talking to each other. It was a conversation.

LIZ: They were communicating.

TREE: But it was more than that; the way they moved – one minute they were flying.

LIZ: The next they were lovers...

TREE: ... then warriors.

GAVIN: When it ended they asked us: What did you think?

TREE: It was ... cool.

LIZ: Yeah, cool.

GAVIN: Cool for school.

JULIE: *(Nods her head in agreement)* They said: Do you want to try?

TREE: *(Shrugs)*

LIZ: *(Shrugs)*

GAVIN: *(Shrugs)*

JULIE: *(Shrugs)*

TREE: But we had no choice. No say in the matter.

They run to the back of the acting area and begin a synchronised¹ warm-up. We hear a simple rhythm - it could be drum beats or a simple bass riff². We hear a voice ...

VOICE: Shoulders up and down and up and down and up and down. Left shoulder right shoulder left shoulder right shoulder left and right and left and right. Head down head up head down head up to the right and left and right and left. Right arm swing and round and round etc.

They work part-way through the body until it all stops quite abruptly. They all sit on the chairs in attitudes of exhaustion³ except Tree who brings his chair downstage.

TREE: We were all tired when we had finished. But it was a good tiredness. For the rest of the day I couldn't concentrate on any of the lessons. All I had in my head were those dancers and I wanted to come home, here, to my room, to be alone with my thoughts. When they danced, glided, floated, fought, they were communicating. But it was more than that. When they danced it was like they were speaking to me. I saw it clearly. Have you ever heard a song, or read a poem or a book, or even seen a painting and you've thought – yeah, that's what I feel, that's me, I understand that? That's what I felt, only this was big-time, huge, massive⁴. For the first time in my life I knew that I wanted something. Really wanted ...

¹ gleichzeitige (synchrone) Aufwärmübungen

² einfache Bassmelodie (Lauf)

³ (körperliche) Erschöpfung

⁴ irre stark, massiv, durchschlagend

Tree takes a few steps that we've seen the dancers do. It's competent although a little shaky¹. He gets bolder² and picks up his chair which he uses as his partner. He tries a few more steps before losing his balance and the chair crashes to the floor.

GAVIN *as Jack*: What's going on up there?

TREE: Nothing, Jack. I just tripped³.

GAVIN *as Jack*: What are you doing? It sounded like a herd of elephants.

TREE: I wasn't doing anything, Jack. I fell over. That's all.

GAVIN *as Jack*: Well, don't. You're a clumsy oaf⁴.

TREE: Idiot!

GAVIN *as Jack*: You what?

TREE: I said, it's hot.

GAVIN *as Jack*: I'll give you hot⁵. Another sound out of you and I'll be up there, do you hear?

Tree deliberately⁶ dances a few more steps and purposely slams⁷ the chair down. Gavin, still at the back, jumps to his feet, knocking his chair over backwards. Tree crouches⁸ to protect himself. Liz comes forward.

LIZ: The next day when I got to the Gym, Tree was already there.

Tree sits on the chair and begins to rub his stomach.

LIZ: You're early. You must like dancing.

TREE: It's all right.

LIZ: Are you in pain?

TREE: Yeah. My ... body aches all over. What about you?

LIZ: I'm really stiff. But I enjoyed it, yesterday. It was fun working with you. And Julie and Gavin, of course.

TREE: Yeah. It's funny that we've been together in so many detentions and we've never really spoken to each other.

LIZ: Yeah.

TREE: Yeah.

They don't know what to say to each other.

LIZ *to audience*: I don't know what to say now. He's looking at me and I can't think of a thing to say. I feel ... stupid.

TREE *to audience*: I wish I hadn't said that – about never speaking to each other. Now she's expecting me to talk to her...

¹ geschickt, aber ungeübt

² mutiger (mit mehr Selbstvertrauen)

³ ich bin gestolpert

⁴ ungeschickter Tölpel

⁵ ich werd' dir gleich 'heiß' geben

⁶ absichtlich, mit Absicht

⁷ bewusst hinknallen

⁸ zusammenkauern

LIZ: Dancing!

TREE: Yeah. Dancing – it’s good. What did you think of the dance class yesterday?

LIZ: It was hard work, but I think that’s why I liked it. Miss Gordon was right about us working hard in PE. That’s the only time, in school, that I feel happy – I can really push myself¹. I’d rather be back at my old school, with my real friends, I suppose. I was so frightened on my first day here. I remember ...

She continues to speak although we do not hear her. Tree turns to the audience ...

TREE: I always thought that Liz was stuck-up², that she thought she was better than the rest of us, but she’s not like that at all. She’s really ... you know ... cool. When she speaks she has this funny way of bringing the side of her mouth down ... Ruby-red³ lips. She’s telling me her life story, here, pouring her heart out⁴. But why to me ...?

LIZ: ... And I cried - all night. I’ve never told anyone. *(To the audience:)* Why have I told him about that? Tree, of all people. He must think I’m such a wimp⁵. *(To Tree:)* You liked the class, yesterday, I was watching you.

TREE: Yeah? I don’t know if I can explain it. Watching a dance company was something, but actually dancing is something else. It’s like I’ve picked up a saxophone and found that I can play it. Just from that one class I’ve found something so strong. Nobody around here expects me to amount to anything⁶. It’s the same with my mother and stepfather. I was beginning to believe it myself...

Tree continues speaking although we cannot hear him. Liz turns to the audience.

LIZ: This is Tree I am talking to ... the hard case - the head case⁷. He roars and swears and swaggers⁸. But here he is - telling me about his home, his stepfather and ... dancing – as he speaks, his hands flow through the air, his eyes are alight⁹, he’s animated, alive¹⁰ – he’s dancing now, even though he’s standing still. I like his shoulders. I wonder what it would be like to rest my hands upon his shoulders now? Why is he telling me all this?

TREE: ... And I’ve always been scared of Jack. Until now. *(To the audience:)* Why have I told her that? She’ll think I’ve gone soft¹¹. *(To Liz:)* The others are late.

¹ da kann ich aus mir herausgehen, mich zu Höchstleistungen anspornen

² eingebildet (sich als jemand Besserer empfinden)

³ (rubin)rote Lippen

⁴ das Herz ausschütten

⁵ Waschlappen, Weichei

⁶ ...dass ich irgendetwas wert bin, dass aus mir was wird

⁷ der schwere Fall – der Fall für den Psychiater

⁸ er tobt und flucht und gibt an (d.h. spielt den Halbstarken)

⁹ seine Augen leuchten

¹⁰ er ist so lebhaft, energiegeladen

¹¹ zum Weichei werden

LIZ: Yeah. (*To the audience:*) Why is he looking at me like that?
 TREE *to the audience*: I think I like her, but she's giving me that icy stare¹ that shouts: keep off!
 LIZ *to the audience*: He's really nice, but I know he's not interested in me. That's not a smile, it's more of a sneer².
 TREE AND LIZ: *To the audience*: Oh, well...
Julie and Gavin come downstage. They over-exaggerate³ their stiffness and walk like bound mummies⁴.
 GAVIN *with each step*: Ow! Ow! Ow! Ow! Ow!
 JULIE: I'm so stiff I can't even chew gum.
 GAVIN: I liked it better when we were all bored. Can't we tell them we don't want to do this dancing anymore?
 TREE: Liz and I were just saying how much we enjoyed it.
 LIZ: Yeah.
 GAVIN: You've got to be joking ...
 JULIE: Even my hair aches!
 TREE: You've just got to loosen up⁵ ...
Tree picks up a chair and begins to beat a gentle rhythm ...
 TREE: Shoulders up and down and up and down and up and down. Left shoulder right shoulder left shoulder right shoulder left and right and left and right. Head down head up head down head up to the right and left and right and left. Right arm swing and round and round etc. ...
They join in, slowly and painfully, until, bit by bit, their bodies loosen up and they get into the full swing⁶ of it. It stops and we begin to hear a new piece of music. Gavin becomes a Dancer.
 GAVIN *as Dancer*: Okay. Listen to this track, because we're going to put some moves to it – choreograph it. And then, maybe, in a few weeks, you could perform it in front of the school. What do you think?

Music

TREE: This was it. This was what I wanted. I said: It'll be cool - a laugh - a gas⁷!

LIZ: And we said ...

LIZ/ GAVIN/ JULIE: No!

TREE: Come on! This is a chance – a chance to do something. We come here every day, we mooch from lesson to lesson⁸, using just enough energy to stay out of trouble, and then we go home. Boring. Nobody at school expects us to

¹ kalter, abweisender Blick

² spöttischer Grinsen

³ übertreiben, überzeichnen

⁴ einbandagierte Mumien

⁵ lockerer werden

⁶ ganz bei der Sache, voll dabei

⁷ das wird cool, eine Hetz' (Gaudi), zum Schreien

⁸ wir schleppen uns von einer Stunde zur nächsten

amount to anything. But we can show them. We can carve¹ our names on the wall: Tree was here. And Gavin. And Liz. And Julie. And this is how we'll carve them - by dancing - so they'll never forget us.

GAVIN: We said ...

LIZ/ GAVIN/JULIE: No!

TREE: I got heavy². I said: None of you have any friends ...

LIZ: I knew I shouldn't have told you!

TREE: But if we do this together, we'll be a crew³ – tight! Together. Look around, meet your new crew.

They all look at each other.

JULIE: We said ...

LIZ/ GAVIN/ JULIE: Get lost⁴!

TREE: I couldn't let the opportunity slip away⁵, so I said: If we dance in front of the whole school, every boy will want to go out with either Liz or Julie and every girl will want to go out with me or Gavin ...

LIZ/ GAVIN/ JULIE: We'll do it!

They begin to move slowly to the music. During which ...

TREE: It was great, it was fun. I could do this, I could dance. It was better than swimming, running, football, cycling. It was better than all of them put together. We started to learn technical terms⁶. Plié⁷!

They all plié.

LIZ: We rehearsed every lunchbreak, and then we started to practise after school. It was really enjoyable. Levée⁸!

They all levée.

JULIE: It was ... fun. Second position plié!

GAVIN: It was a laugh, all right. But I couldn't dance for toffee⁹. Even Julie was better than I was. Liz was good, but Tree was brilliant. First position sitting down and having a rest!

They stop and rest.

TREE: Although we were loving every minute of it, we soon realised that it wasn't going to be easy, it wasn't going to be plain sailing¹⁰.

LIZ: The Fates were against us¹¹ ...

¹ einritzen (sich verewigen)

² ich wurde deutlicher (mehr Nachdruck)

³ ein Team

⁴ vergiss es (“schleich’ dich”)

⁵ die Gelegenheit vorbeiziehen lassen

⁶ Fachausdrücke

⁷ leicht in die Knie gehen

⁸ gerade (aufgerichtet) stehen

⁹ (sl.) nicht um's Verrecken, überhaupt nicht

¹⁰ einfach, ohne Stolpersteine

¹¹ das Schicksal war gegen uns

GAVIN: Everyone was against us ...

JULIE: Especially ...

TREE/LIZ/GAVIN/JULIE: ... The Deputy Head¹!

LIZ: How shall we describe the Deputy Head?

They all become the Deputy Head as they describe him ...

TREE: A face of stone ...

LIZ: Daggers in his eyes² ...

GAVIN: A razor for a tongue³ ...

JULIE: And his left shoe squeaked.

TREE/LIZ/GAVIN/JULIE: Squeeeeeek!

They hold the images they've created of the deputy head for a moment – it's exaggerated, making him a mixture of Ghengis Khan and Richard the Third⁴. Tree breaks out of the tableau⁵ giving us a more subtle⁶, human version of the Deputy Head. He squeaks across the acting area ...

TREE *as Deputy Head*: What's going on here? You boy, what do you think you're doing? What's your name? Who's in charge here?

Julie steps forward.

TREE *as Deputy Head*: Ah, Miss Gordon. Perhaps you could tell me the purpose of this rabble-rousing racket⁷?

JULIE: Miss Gordon said, (*as Miss Gordon*:) This is a dance class, Deputy Head. It is something that I've arranged.

TREE *as Deputy Head*: Ah, the famous dance class. Yes, I've heard much about this famous dance class. Can't help but hear the raucous cacophony⁸ - that terrible sound that is supposed to be music! It's a waste of school resources⁹, if you ask me.

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: I wasn't asking you, but if you must know, apart from the electricity used to run the sound system, this is costing the school nothing at all.

TREE *as Deputy Head*: That is where you are wrong, my dear.

GAVIN: And he squeaked up close to Miss Gordon ...

LIZ: Until they were almost nose to nose ...

¹ Stellvertreter des Direktors (Administrator)

² stechende Augen (wie Dolche)

³ eine messerscharfe Zunge (Rasierklänge)

⁴ eine Mischung aus dem grausamen Mongolenherrscher Dschingis Khan und dem brutalen, verkrüppelten engl. König

⁵ aus dem Standbild heraustreten

⁶ eine subtilere, realistischere Darstellung

⁷ aufrührerischer (aufhetzerischer) Wirbel

⁸ unangenehm laute Missklänge

⁹ Budget, Ressourcen

SEASON 2014/15

8 Sept – 19 Oct 2014

World Premiere of the English Version of BUTTERBROT

CHICKENSHIT by Gabriel Barylli

This heartwarming and witty comedy follows the lives of three friends, as they discuss their views on life, art, relationships and women and how to eliminate possibly the most dangerous threat to their overall happiness: passionate love! Martin, Stefan and Peter are sharing a flat and everything is running smoothly in this “male” household until one day Martin meets the woman of his dreams...

3 Nov – 20 Dec 2014

DIAL „M“ FOR MURDER by Frederick Knott

Frederick Knott's 1950's classic British thriller is a masterpiece of suspense and intricate plotting and became a worldwide success through Hitchcock's film starring Grace Kelly. Wealthy and elegant Sheila Wendice is leading a seemingly happy life with her husband Tony, an ex-tennis player, until one day, she receives a blackmailing letter about a brief affair she had with crime-fiction writer Max Halliday. She hasn't the slightest suspicion that Tony has long been aware of her secret. Wanting revenge as well as her money, he is meticulously planning her murder, perfect alibi included. It all seems to be going according to plan until it falters in the most unexpected way...

26 Jan – 7 March 2015

VENUS IN FUR by David Ives

David Ives' dark comedy centres on frustrated playwright and director, Thomas Novachek, attempting to cast the leading role in his stage adaptation of the famous novella „Venus in Furs” by Austrian writer Leopold von Sacher-Masoch (after whom the term “masochism” was coined). When young actress, Vanda Jordan, arrives several hours late for her audition, Thomas is less than impressed. But Vanda pressurises him into reading with her and her masterful performance flips all Thomas' pre-conceived expectations of the script and turns the session into a tango for dominance between actress and director, woman and man. *Venus in Fur* is a mesmerising, erotic game of submission and domination, blurring the lines between fantasy and reality.

Venus in Fur was adapted for the screen by Roman Polanski in 2012 and filmed with his wife Emmanuelle Seigner.

Not suitable for under 16s

23 March – 30 April 2015

by arrangement with Edward Snape for Fiery Angel Limited

John Buchan and Alfred Hitchcock's

THE 39 STEPS adapted by **Patrick Barlow**, from a concept by Simon Corble and Nobby Dimon

Richard Hannay, a perfect gentleman and dashing hero, meets a mysterious woman at a London theatre, who implores him to take her home with him. She soon confesses to be a spy, hot on the trail of a dangerous organisation. That same night she gets stabbed in his flat and Richard is cast into a mad chase to escape both the police and the mysterious spy organisation, "the 39 Steps", whilst trying to solve the riddle behind her murder.

The 39 Steps has taken the West End and Broadway by storm – a delightfully theatrical tour-de-force with four actors performing all 139 parts.

6 – 10 May 2015

Vienna's English Theatre Youth Ensemble presents

Willy Russell's Musical BLOOD BROTHERS

Willy Russell's award winning musical *Blood Brothers* is a unique combination of a gripping story with a dramatic musical score, which made it a hit in the West End, where it played for 24 years. *Blood Brothers* tells the story of a financially struggling mother who, in desperation, gives away one of her twin boys at birth to her wealthy childless employer. Unaware of their blood ties and despite their vastly different upbringing, the boys grow up to become best friends, and then rivals, both falling in love with the same girl.

26 May – 3 July 2015

Ken Ludwig's FOX ON THE FAIRWAY

Henry Bingham, president of the Quail Valley Country Club, is in a desperate situation. In the midst of preparations for the Annual Inter-Club Golf Tournament, he discovers that his opponent and arch-enemy, 'Dickie' Bell, has managed to lure his best player away to play for his own, opposing, side. This will most certainly result in Henry losing the huge bet he has foolishly wagered if he cannot find an adequate replacement immediately. Luckily he discovers that his newly hired hand Justin, who is in love with Louise, the waitress at the club house, is a surprisingly talented golfer. Justin does not disappoint in the tournament and has a huge lead. But when, close to the end, he learns that Louise has lost the engagement ring he gave her, he starts to unravel and hilarious mayhem ensues.

Vienna's English Theatre – 1080 Vienna, Josefgasse 12 – 01-402 12 60-0

tickets@englishtheatre.at

TREE *as Deputy Head*: It's costing the school very dear¹. You don't see the damage you are causing², do you? You take four lazy, disruptive, anti-social layabouts³ and you reward⁴ them by giving them special dancing lessons. Worse; you intend to parade⁵ these ... hoodlums⁶ in front of the entire school, like celebrities⁷. Now, we have some fine, young, upstanding⁸ students in this school who attain⁹ high marks in all their exams. What do you do for them, Miss Gordon? You do nothing. So, the message we are sending is: work hard and you get nothing, but break all the rules and you'll get a nice surprise. You're opening the floodgates¹⁰ to trouble, Miss Gordon.

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: If what you said was true, Deputy Head, I would agree with you. But the four people in question are not layabouts, nor are they hoodlums. They are bright, energetic, young people who have lost interest in school. As a teacher, I see it as my duty to re-kindle¹¹ that interest. Since starting this dance class not one of the students has been in detention, all homeworks have been completed in time and the standard of their work is said to be improving¹² ...

GAVIN: They had locked horns ...

LIZ: Neither of them were prepared to give way¹³.

TREE *as Deputy Head*: You haven't heard the last of this¹⁴, Miss Gordon. The show will not go on! The Head shall hear of this!

Tree turns triumphantly, and squeaks a few paces away ...

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: The Head already has.

He's stopped in his tracks¹⁵.

TREE *as Deputy Head*: Oh? And what did the Head have to say?

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: The Head said that the dance class was innovative. And then he said; well done, Miss Gordon.

¹ es entsteht großer Schaden für die Schule

² Schaden anrichten

³ vier faule, nicht gesellschaftsfähige Schmarotzer

⁴ belohnen

⁵ vorführen (d.h. sie werden auch noch bewundert)

⁶ Rowdies, Rüppel

⁷ Berühmtheiten (die etwas geleistet haben)

⁸ ordentlich, verantwortungsbewusst

⁹ erreichen, erarbeiten

¹⁰ die Schleusen öffnen

¹¹ wieder entzünden, das Feuer wieder entfachen

¹² die Leistungen verbessern sich ständig

¹³ nachgeben

¹⁴ Sie werden noch über diese Sache hören (d.h. das letzte Wort ist noch nicht gesprochen)

¹⁵ plötzlich, abrupt stehenbleiben

Tree begins to twitch¹ and slowly transform into the Ghengis Khan image of the Deputy Head before squeaking away ...

LIZ/GAVIN: (*Clapping*) Nice one, Miss G!

JULIE *as Miss Gordon (angrily)*: Get on with the dance class!

They snap back in line² and begin slow movements.

TREE: It wasn't just some of the teachers who gave us a hard time.

LIZ: Our classmates ...

GAVIN: Our friends!

LIZ: Gave us stick³, too.

JULIE: They made fun of us ...

LIZ: Picked on us.

GAVIN: Even bullied us.

TREE: But we were tough and we dealt with it – in our own fashion⁴

They strike poses to match ...

JULIE: (*Blows a raspberry⁵*)

LIZ: Get a life⁶!

TREE: Do you want to make something of it⁷?

There's nothing from Gavin and the other three look to him. He curls himself up into a ball...

GAVIN: No! Don't hit me!

TREE: Gavin?

GAVIN: It was terrifying, Tree. They were going to beat me up.

TREE: Who did?

GAVIN: The lads in the class...

Tree, Liz and Julie become the lads in the class...

LIZ: It's Gav!

JULIE: Gavva!

TREE: Gavin! What's all this about you ... dancing?

LIZ: Become a ballerina, have you!?

JULIE: Do you dress up in tights? Girls'tights?

TREE: Of course he does.

LIZ: And Gavin is a girl now.

TREE: He's gay!

JULIE: He's the teacher's pet⁸...

Through the following rap they push Gavin around ...

¹ zucken

² sich schnell wieder in einer Reihe aufstellen

³ runtermachen, quälen, sekkieren

⁴ wir sind damit fertig geworden - auf unsere Art und Weise

⁵ verächtlich schnauben

⁶ sei wieder normal, mach was aus deinem Leben

⁷ hast du was dagegen, passt dir was nicht

⁸ Liebling der Lehrer, Streber

TREE/LIZ/JULIE: (*rapping*)

He's gone soft in the head
Since his Dad dropped dead
Taken up dancing
Twisting and prancing¹
All twirls and swirls²
Just one of the girls
Are you gonna wear a frou-frou tutu³
Maybe model it for me and you-you
We've lost our friend Gavin have you seen her
She'd dressed up like a bloody ballerina!
Like it's not bad enough
That you're acting like a poof⁴!
Maybe we should start calling you Gavina

The gang rough up Gavin.

GAVIN: They said I was a girl.

JULIE: What's wrong with being a girl?

GAVIN: Nothing. If you are a girl.

TREE: I was angry. (*To Gavin*) Don't worry, Gavin. I'll sort them out⁵. No one pushes my friend around. I'll give them all a good hiding⁶!

LIZ: Then you'll be as bad as they are. You don't have to resort to violence⁷.

TREE: Ha! The voice of reason⁸. What do you suggest?

LIZ: We just have to talk to them, that's all. Make them understand. Ask them politely to stop bullying Gavin.

TREE: So, we sought them out⁹. Followed them to their hideout¹⁰ in the corner of the Geography room. We faced them. Squared up to them¹¹. Liz stepped forward...

LIZ: You leave Gavin alone...

TREE: She said, in a civilised manner...

GAVIN: But they laughed at us ...

JULIE: Swore at us...

¹ schnelle, hüpfende (Tanz)schritte

² sich drehen und verrenken

³ Ballettröckchen

⁴ Schwuler

⁵ denen werd'ich es zeigen, die werde ich schon zurechtbiegen

⁶ ordentlich verprügeln

⁷ du musst nicht auf Gewalt zurückgreifen

⁸ die Stimme der Vernunft

⁹ aufsuchen, sie stellen

¹⁰ Versteck

¹¹ sie konfrontieren

TREE: Threatened us. Liz tried a different approach¹ ...

LIZ: You leave Gavin alone ... or else!

They jump into comic-book fighting poses ...

LIZ: Biff!

TREE: Kerpow!

GAVIN: Bop!

JULIE: Ker-runch!

TREE: They didn't bother us again.

GAVIN: Much.

TREE: I took Gavin to the cinema, to cheer him up² ...

They're in a cinema and Liz and Julie become cinema staff.

TREE: Gav had no money, so I paid. Two tickets to see Iron Man 3 and a bucket of popcorn. I blew my entire week's pocket money³, and still Gavin sulked⁴.

Liz hands Gavin a bucket of popcorn and Julie shows them to their seats. Liz sits behind as a member of the cinema audience.

JULIE: Enjoy the film!

They sit, watching the "screen", sharing the popcorn.

TREE: How's your Mum?

GAVIN: Don't know. I haven't seen her for a million years.

TREE: It's hard for her too, Gav. Start to worry when she brings someone home who says he wants to be your new Dad. How's the popcorn? Do you like the adverts? You enjoying yourself? Have you done your English homework yet? Are you enjoying the dance classes? Aren't those two dancers cool? Are you looking forward to the performance? Are you still worried about the lads in the class?

Through all these questions Gavin has responded with minimum physical gestures whilst steadily munching on the popcorn⁵.

TREE: So what do you want to talk about, before the film starts?

GAVIN: Boy's talk.

TREE: Here we go.

GAVIN: Liz! Phooaaaaa! She's a bit of all right⁶. Gorgeous body, great legs, and pretty! She's really good-looking. And have you noticed the way she brings the sides of her mouth down when she speaks? Those ruby-red lips! Are you in love with her, Tree? Liz, I mean.

Tree chokes⁷ on his popcorn.

TREE: What? Look - I - what? ... Er...

¹ eine andere Methode, einen anderen Zugang

² aufheitern

³ ich hab mein ganzes wöchentliches Taschengeld verpulvert

⁴ schmollen

⁵ Popcorn knabbern

⁶ die ist nicht ohne

⁷ sich verschlucken

GAVIN: That means: yes. You've gone red and you're tongue-tied¹, that means you are.

TREE: Shut up, Gav.

GAVIN: She's in love with you.

Tree chokes again.

TREE: What? Look - I - what? ... Er...

GAVIN: I can tell by the way she watches you in the dance class. Can't keep her eyes off you.

TREE: And what do you think of Julie?

GAVIN: Very nice, very funny, a bit strange at times, but not my type!

TREE: That's a shame. I've noticed the way she looks at you; sneaky little glances² from the corner of her eyes. I think she's in love with you...

GAVIN: She's got very nice eyes. And hair, beautiful hair. Actually, she's very pretty when you look at her. Lovely body, nice legs. Phooooaa!

TREE: Ask her to go out with you, then!

GAVIN: Me?

TREE: Why not?

LIZ: Ssshhh! The film's about to start!

Warm-up riff and voice. They start their warm-up exercises. Halfway through Julie yells with pain. She clutches her leg³. Sound stops and they all freeze⁴ apart from Liz.

LIZ: Things got worse. After three weeks of rehearsals Julie hurt herself. Quite badly. We hadn't finished choreographing the dance and we didn't know if we would be able to carry on ...

They re-animate⁵ and Julie crashes to the floor...

LIZ: What is it?

JULIE: My leg.

TREE: It'll be a cramp.

JULIE: It hurts. It's on fire.

LIZ: Where does it hurt? Tree, help her up. Gavin, fetch a chair.

JULIE: It hurts here.

They sit her down. Gavin mops her brow⁶, pats her hand and grins at her.

LIZ: What type of pain?

JULIE: Sharp. Feels like a knife is sticking in it.

¹ schüchtern

² verstohlene kurze Blicke

³ sich das Bein halten

⁴ bewegungslos verharren

⁵ weitermachen, sich wieder bewegen

⁶ die Stirn abwischen

LIZ: It's a pulled muscle. You've pulled the gastrocnemius muscle¹.
 TREE: How do you know?
 LIZ: We're studying it in Biology.
 GAVIN: Are we?
 LIZ: Yes. It's this muscle, the calf muscle. Muscles are attached to the bone by tendons². Julie has stretched one of the tendons³.
 TREE: I must have missed that Biology class.
 JULIE: Excuse me.
 LIZ: I find all that stuff fascinating. And dancing, all this training, has helped me to understand it. It's all fallen into place⁴, it's all so obvious.
 JULIE: Excuse me ...
 LIZ: You see muscles work in pairs by contracting and expanding. Take, for example the biceps and the triceps. As the biceps contract, allowing your lower arm to raise ...
 JULIE: Excuse me! I'm in pain and you're giving a biology lesson?
 LIZ: Sorry.
 TREE: What's the remedy⁵?
 LIZ: Keep it warm. Lots of rest, until it's better.
 JULIE: How long will that be?
 LIZ: A week. Perhaps two.
 JULIE: I'm out of the dance.
 TREE: We're all out of the dance. It's a dance for four people.
Gavin has become one of the Dancers.
 GAVIN *as Dancer*: What's happened?
 JULIE: Pain. Here. Sharp.
 GAVIN *as Dancer*: You've pulled your gastrocnemius muscle.
 LIZ: See!
 GAVIN *as Dancer*: Happens all the time. You'll have to sit out⁶ and watch, for a while.
 TREE: But we haven't finished choreographing the dance. How can Julie keep up if she misses out on a week.
 GAVIN *as Dancer*: I'll teach you how to write the steps down, Julie. At least you'll be able to learn the dance on paper. Have a rest, everyone.
Gavin helps the limping Julie away. Liz takes a chair and takes it downstage.
 LIZ: For the first time in six months I was happy. I looked forward to each day. I got all my work done in time. My grades were getting better. Life was easy.

¹ Wadenmuskel

² Sehnen

³ die Sehne gezerrt, überdehnt

⁴ plötzlich ist mir alles sonnenklar

⁵ was hilft dagegen

⁶ abwarten (sitzenbleiben) und zuschauen

The harder I worked the easier it all seemed. I think it was because I had made friends. We all had something in common. At first I thought it was the dance project, then I understood. Julie is all right, once you get to know her. Because she's quiet, people think she's stupid. She's far from stupid. Gavin is funny, he makes me laugh. But I feel sorry for him, he needs looking after. And Tree, he's a hard case, a tough guy. Thinks he's Daniel Craig. The thing was - we were all lost, and Miss Gordon saw that. She used the dancing to bring us together.

She looks at Tree who is practising at the back.

I'll be honest with you, I like Tree. I mean, I really like him. But I don't think he's interested. It would be the most marvellous thing in the world if he came over here now and said...

TREE: Liz, you look gorgeous. What are you doing on Saturday night?

LIZ: If life was that simple...

TREE: Whenever I see you, my heart races, my pulse quickens¹ ...

LIZ: And I realise...

TREE: That you are the one for me. Let me take you in my arms ...

Tree has picked up the chair, put it in Liz's arms and has gone whilst she is still in her day dream. She kisses the chair, realises what she is doing and is embarrassed in front of the audience. She shrugs.

LIZ: Oh, well...

She takes the chair up to the back as Tree comes downstage...

TREE: This is the story of my life; something good looks like it's about to happen, then it all goes wrong. End of story. I have a distant memory² of my father, of my real father; we were happy, but he left. Five years ago my mother said: how would you like a new father? And there's this man laden down³ with presents, all for me. He plays football with me, makes me laugh. When they get married I understand that this man loathes me⁴ because I stand between him and his wife, just as he stands between me and my mother. Now I discover dancing. It's something I know I can do. It's way out, a place I can get lost in. People think I'm strange because I'm a boy who wants to dance – I can handle that. It's worth the hassle⁵. And now it's all going wrong as usual. The school is against it. Julie is injured. Gavin can't dance. Liz can dance, but she's not really interested. She's not interested in me. I'll be honest, I like Liz. I mean, I really like her. But she wouldn't go out with the likes of me. Imagine ... Liz, would you go out with me - be my girlfriend?

LIZ: *(Screams with laughter)*

¹ meine Pulsfrequenz erhöht sich, mein Puls rast

² eine schwache Erinnerung

³ beladen mit

⁴ ablehnen, hassen, eine Abneigung haben

⁵ es ist das ganze Theater (die ganze Mühe) wert

TREE: Liz, I hate the world I'm living in and I'm looking for a means of escape.

Will you escape with me?

LIZ: Not with the likes of you.

GAVIN *as Jack*: What's going on up there? Who are you talking to?

TREE: Nothing, Jack. Nobody, Jack. Mind your own business, Jack.

Tree marches upstage as Julie limps down...

JULIE: My leg still felt like a metal spike had been pushed up the back of it. A fiery, burning feeling¹. Then it became a dull ache, with shooting, stabbing sensations² when I walk. But it was cool ... it made me feel that ... I was alive.

Gavin rushes downstage.

GAVIN: Mum! Mum! I'm home! Sorry I'm late. Dance class. Had to practise after school. Julie hurt her leg and has to sit out and it means we have to have extra rehearsals. I can't wait for you to come and see it. See me, up on that stage. I'm doing it for you, Mum. Mum? Mother? Are you in? Is anyone there?

Music. Tree and Liz stand face to face. Julie sits to one side. Gavin becomes one of the Dancers.

GAVIN *as Dancer*: Okay. Let's take that sequence³ from the top. Get ready, here it comes and ... step and step and step twist and hold. And lift. And down and push and push and push and push and round and down. Okay.

Music stops.

GAVIN *as Dancer*: That's good. Well remembered. Try it again.

Music. Tree and Liz repeat the sequence.

GAVIN *as Dancer*: Okay. That's good. That's fine. But there's something missing. You're doing all the steps but you're not dancing together. Not really dancing. What does it mean? Tree, when you're pushing forward, what are you telling Liz? Liz, when you're twisting around Tree what are you saying to him? Think about it. Take a break and think for a moment.

Tree and Liz face each other. The music starts and they dance the sequence again. When it's finished Tree and Liz are nose to nose, breathing hard. It's a charged moment.

GAVIN *as Dancer*: That's the one! Julie, have you got all those steps down?

Gavin takes Julie's note pad. There's a pencil drawing of Liz and Tree in an embrace.

GAVIN *as Dancer*: This is not an Art class, Julie. You're supposed to be noting the steps – not drawing the two of them in each other's arms.

TREE: To cheer Julie up, Gavin took her to the cinema.

Gavin and Julie are in the cinema, Liz and Tree become the staff.

GAVIN: Do you want to see "Dawn of the Planet of the Apes"?

¹ heißes, brennendes Gefühl

² ein dumpfer Schmerz, manchmal zuckend und stechend

³ Schrittfolge

JULIE: I can't stand monkeys.

GAVIN: "Hercules" ?

JULIE: (*Shrugs.*)

GAVIN: Popcorn?

JULIE: I'm on a diet.

GAVIN: Sugar-free coke?

JULIE: It makes me burp¹.

GAVIN: Two to see "Hercules".

Liz gives them the tickets and Tree shows them to their seats.

TREE: Enjoy the film.

GAVIN: So – are enjoying the dance classes?

JULIE: I'm injured remember. Not really dancing. Gavin, why did you ask me here?

GAVIN: Well ... since you ask ... I wanted to tell you how good-looking I think you are ...

JULIE: Couldn't you have told me at school?

GAVIN: No. Yes. No! The thing is, I was wondering, if it's all right with you, and you're not too busy, whether you'd consider², and obviously you might want to give it some thought³ because I know I'm not much to look at; strange nose, sticky-up hair, zits⁴, and I don't have much money, either ...

JULIE: What are you trying to say, Gavin?

GAVIN: Will you be my girlfriend?

JULIE: Get lost!

LIZ: Ssshhhh! The film's about to start ...

TREE: It was the day before our performance. Life was perfect, life was sweet. We had created the dance, we had rehearsed it, we were ready ...

Tree shows us some of the steps ...

LIZ: Lunchtime the next day, in front of the whole school. We'd become a team, a crew, we'd become friends, that was the best part for me. And also ... there was Tree and me.

JULIE: My leg was better. I was dancing again.

TREE: Even Gavin was dancing like he had wings on his feet. Eh, Gavin?

GAVIN: Yeah.

LIZ: Your mother will be so proud.

GAVIN: Yeah.

TREE: What's the matter, Gavin?

GAVIN: She can't come and watch. She's very busy, can't get the time off work.

TREE: Never mind, Gavin. We're here. We'll be here.

¹ aufstoßen, rülpsen

² in Betracht ziehen

³ natürlich wirst du darüber nachdenken wollen

⁴ unförmige Nase, stark gegelte Haare, Pickel

GAVIN: I know. Thanks.

TREE: Nothing could stop us now.

LIZ: What could go wrong?

JULIE: And then Miss Gordon told us: (*as Miss Gordon:*) We have to cancel the performance. It's the Deputy Head ... He came to me the other day...

Tree becomes the Deputy Head ...

TREE *as Deputy Head*: Ah, Miss Gordon. A word, if I may. When does your little dance troupe startle us with their skill and dedication¹?

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: Thursday lunchtime, Deputy Head. In the Main Hall.

TREE *as Deputy Head*: I thought so. I'm afraid we have a problem. Electricians will be working in the hall from tomorrow; inspecting the lighting, making repairs, that sort of thing. The hall will be out of use for some time.

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: Can't the work start on Friday?

TREE *as Deputy Head*: I'm afraid not.

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: But my students have been working hard, preparing for this.

TREE *as Deputy Head*: A pity.

Tree squeaks off.

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: The Head will hear of this!

TREE *as Deputy Head*: The Head already has ...

Tree begins to laugh and turns into the exaggerated image of the Deputy Head before squeaking off...

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: Don't worry. The show will go ahead, somehow.

Perhaps you could perform here, in the Gym. I've got to go and talk to the Head. I'll see you tomorrow ...

TREE: All that work for nothing?

LIZ: I can't believe this is happening.

GAVIN: I'm going home.

JULIE: Me, too.

LIZ: I've got to go, too. Bye.

TREE: This is the story of my life. Hopes raised – then dashed² ...

GAVIN *as Jack*: What's this? This invitation?

TREE: When I got home from school, Jack started to shout ...

GAVIN *as Jack*: What's this invitation about?

TREE: I hadn't mentioned the dance classes to my mother or Jack ...

GAVIN *as Jack*: It's inviting me and your mother to watch a ... (*reading the invitation*) ... student display of dance ...

TREE: The show was off, as far as I could see, but I wasn't telling Jack that.

GAVIN *as Jack*: What does it mean – display of dance?

¹ überraschen, erschrecken – mit ihrer Kunst und ihrem Engagement

² da ich mache mir Hoffnungen, und sie werden gleich wieder zerschlagen

TREE: You know ... dance. Waving your arms and legs about in time to the music.

GAVIN *as Jack*: Why should we want to waste our time watching a group of spotty kids¹ dance?

TREE: Because I'm one of those spotty kids.

GAVIN *as Jack*: What? You? In a ... display of dance? You're having me on².

TREE: Do you have a problem with that, Jack?

GAVIN *as Jack*: I bloody do! What do you want to do something like that for?

TREE: I like it.

GAVIN *as Jack*: You go to school to learn to read and write, not to dance...

TREE: I've learned to read and write. Now I'm learning to dance. All right?

GAVIN *as Jack*: No! It's not all right! What'll people think; a grown lad³, like you, prancing about the stage – displaying himself? They'll think you're soft in the head, they'll think you're queer⁴.

TREE: I don't care what they think.

GAVIN *as Jack*: I do. And you're not bloody doing it. Understand?

TREE: Try and stop me!

Gavin grabs Tree and holds him close.

GAVIN *as Jack*: You will not disgrace⁵ your mother and me by making a spectacle of yourself. No son of mine is.

TREE: I'm not your son!

GAVIN *as Jack*: You cheeky young...

Gavin throws Tree to the floor and marches off. Liz comes down to Tree.

LIZ: Tree? Are you all right?

TREE: I've been thinking ... that we shouldn't dance today. It's been good, these past few weeks, and we've all got a lot out of it. But so much is against us. If we carry on we'll set ourselves apart from the rest of the school. Everyone will resent us⁶ for not being the same as they are. Teachers like the Deputy Head will despise us for daring to step out of line⁷. It's easier not to try. It's easier to give up.

LIZ: What's going on, Tree? I thought you wanted to carve your name on the wall - show everybody...

TREE: Nobody's interested, Liz. Nobody expects us to amount to anything.

GAVIN: Tree's right. They'd just laugh at us.

LIZ: What do you think, Julie?

JULIE: (*Shrugs.*)

¹ pickelige Jugendliche

² das ist doch wohl nicht dein Ernst

³ ein erwachsener Bursch

⁴ schwul

⁵ blamieren (Schande über die Familie bringen)

⁶ alle werden uns ablehnen (die Ablehnung spüren lassen)

⁷ ... sie werden uns übelnehmen, dass wir gewagt haben, anders zu sein

LIZ: Who's going to tell the Dancers and Miss Gordon?

TREE: I will.

GAVIN: What will they say?

TREE: Miss Gordon will be angry. She'll say that we've let her down, wasted her time.

LIZ: And the Dancers?

TREE: They'll give us a team talk; chin up, chest out, best foot forward. We're going to go out there and smash it¹. But it's all right for them, they don't have to live with the consequences.

Gavin and Julie have become the Dancer ...

GAVIN/JULIE *as Dancers*: Hi!

GAVIN *as Dancer*: Good news!

JULIE *as Dancer*: The show will go on. We can perform here, in the Gym.

GAVIN *as Dancer*: Even better news. We're going to perform tonight, after school has finished. Gavin, your mother will be able to come after all. All your parents will be able to come.

TREE: We're not going to dance. We've decided.

JULIE *as Dancer*: You're not?

TREE: No. Sorry.

GAVIN *as Dancer*: That's okay.

TREE: It's because ...

JULIE *as Dancer*: No need to explain.

Julie goes to the sound system and turns on some music. The two Dancers dance together. During which, as one busts a move², the other speaks ...

GAVIN *as Dancer*: We dance because we want to.

JULIE *as Dancer*: Because we have to.

GAVIN *as Dancer*: It's what we do best.

JULIE *as Dancer*: This is the way we speak, talk, express ourselves.

GAVIN *as Dancer*: We're not very good with words.

JULIE *as Dancer*: We don't dance just for other people.

GAVIN *as Dancer*: We dance for ourselves.

JULIE *as Dancer*: Because we want to.

GAVIN *as Dancer*: Because we have to.

GAVIN *as Dancer*: Now that we've learned how to speak, found our voice ...

JULIE *as Dancer*: No one can keep us quiet.

GAVIN *as Dancer*: Even if they wanted to.

The dance finishes. They turn the music off.

JULIE *as Dancer*: So if you don't want to perform that's fine with us.

GAVIN *as Dancer*: It's been good working with you. Later³...

¹ wir werden es ihnen zeigen, wir werden aufdrehen

² eine Bewegung (Tanzschritt) vollführen/ausführen

³ (sl) Bis später, CU

The Dancers go.

TREE: Suddenly we felt empty.

LIZ: Like we'd lost something.

TREE: And we thought about what the Dancers had said. And we realised...

JULIE: We had found a voice.

GAVIN: A way of speaking.

LIZ: And who was going to silence us?

TREE: The Deputy Head? The rest of the class? My stepfather, Jack?

GAVIN: No.

LIZ: No way.

TREE: Never.

JULIE: *(Shakes her head)*

TREE: We won't let them.

LIZ: We'll dance for ourselves...

GAVIN: Because we want to...

JULIE: Because we have to...

Music.

TREE: When the whole school had gathered - teachers and students and parents assembled in the Gym. We came out... and – we danced...

They perform the dance. It's exciting, energetic and expertly executed¹. When it's finished they come down to the front of the acting area – they put on jackets, coats and hats ...

TREE: And ... we smashed it! It was like we were flying. And dancing in front of an audience made me feel that I had found a home. Whether they had come to mock us or cheer us on², I didn't care. I had something to tell them and, for a moment, they listened.

JULIE: All that was a while ago now. Time's passed...

TREE: I'm still dancing. I went to the School of Contemporary Dance in London. Miss Gordon helped me apply for scholarships and grants³. And for two years now, I've been dancing with professional companies – I'm thinking about starting my own company.

LIZ: Through dancing I discovered the human body. I decided to study medicine and I graduated from Manchester University last summer. I work as a junior⁴ in a hospital.

TREE: Dr. Liz.

LIZ: Tree and I aren't together anymore. Not for a long time. We both got too involved⁵ in what we wanted to study and didn't have the time for each other ...

¹ schwungvoll und meisterhaft ausgeführt

² um sich über uns lustig zu machen oder uns anzufeuern

³ um Stipendien ansuchen

⁴ Turnusärztin

⁵ wir sind beide ganz in unseren Studien aufgegangen

GAVIN: I work in a bank. I like it. I really do. It's steady¹. I don't dance anymore – couldn't dance anyway; two left feet – and if I did, what would the customers say? I'm glad I did dance, though. It was a laugh. My Mum came and told me she was proud of me...

JULIE: I learnt that you don't have to speak to be able to express yourself and I spent the rest of my school days in the Art room. I am now an Art teacher.

GAVIN: We're all still friends. We often meet up to go and watch Tree. And guess what – Julie and I have been going out together for two years, three months and five days...

JULIE: (*Shrugs*)

GAVIN: We might even get married.

JULIE: Get lost!

LIZ: And did we carve our names on the wall, Tree? Back then?

TREE: On the wall of the school-hall of our memories, we did.

Tree picks up a chair and begins to beat a gentle rhythm

TREE: But what made us dance? Was it Miss Gordon? Or the two dancers? Or even the Deputy Head?

JULIE: It was – having something to say.

The others pick up their chairs and join in, adding to the rhythm.

GAVIN: It was more than that...

LIZ: It was having something to say and knowing...

TREE/LIZ/GAVIN/JULIE: No one could keep us quiet.

The rhythm stops...

TREE: We wouldn't let them.

The End

¹ sicher, regelmäßig, verlässlich

Quick Comprehension Check

- What are the names of the four main characters in the play?
- As the scene opens, where are they, and why?
- Find three adjectives each which, for you, best describe the characters:

T

G

L

J

- Who is Miss Gordon? What, in her opinion, is the main problem of the teens?
- How is she planning to help them improve at school?
- How do the teens feel about this at first?
- Who does most of the talking so far? Why is that, do you think?
- Do their feelings/attitudes change after their first classes? If yes, how?

Make some notes, then talk to a partner or discuss in class:

T

.....

G

.....

L

.....

J

.....

- Tree and Liz eventually start talking to each other. What do they find out?
- What is the Deputy Head's attitude towards Miss Gordon's dance team?
- What do the characters' classmates think of the dance classes?
- Is the way Tree and Gavin are dealing with the situation at school similar or different? How?
- Talking to Gavin in the cinema, what does Tree find out about himself?
- What happens to Julie during the rehearsals?
- Are Tree and Liz actually getting together? When? How?
- Gavin is taking Julie to the cinema. Why?
- What happens the day before the performance?
- Tree loves dancing. How does his stepfather react?
- How do the characters feel about performing now?

- What happens when they tell the dancers that they don't want to perform?
- Does the performance take place in the end?
- What are the characters doing now?

T

G

L

J

- Are they still friends? How do they explain this?

- What do you think of the play? Did you like it? Why/why not?
- Looking at the title of the play, was it what you expected? Why/why not?
- Was the language of the play easy to understand?
- Do you think the characters were interesting? Why/why not?
- Which of the characters did you like best? Explain why?
- Were there any characters you didn't like at all? Why?
- Is there a character you would have liked to learn more about? If yes, who?
- Were there any part(s) of the play that made you feel particularly

happy angry pleased sad interested surprised

- If you could change places with one of the characters, who would you like to change into? Say why. Anyone you would not like to be? Why?
- How do all characters relate to each other?

Try drawing a diagram: the four teenagers in the centre, all other characters around them. Then draw lines, showing how the characters interrelate with each other. If the relationship is a positive (loving/caring/respectful) one, colour the line green; if it's negative, make it red.

VIENNA'S *English* THEATRE

- 1966 MAN OF DESTINY by George Bernard Shaw
1967 THE HAPPY JOURNEY by Thornton Wilder
1968 VILLAGE WOOING by George Bernard Shaw
1970 THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST by Oscar Wilde
1971 THE GLASS MENAGERIE by Tennessee Williams
1972 MAN OF DESTINY by George Bernard Shaw
1973 LOVERS by Brian Friel
1973 AN INSPECTOR CALLS by J. B. Priestley
1974 THE HAPPY JOURNEY by Thornton Wilder
1975 OF LOVERS AND FOOLS, scenes from Shakespeare as arranged by Manfred Vogel
1976 A SLIGHT ACCIDENT by James Saunders
LOOK BACK IN ANGER by John Osborne
1977 THE HAPPY JOURNEY by Thornton Wilder
ARMS AND THE MAN by George Bernard Shaw
1978 FAMILY ALBUM by David Newby
AN INSPECTOR CALLS by J. B. Priestley
1979 THE CANTERVILLE GHOST by Nicholas Allen, based on the story by Oscar Wilde
ALL MY SONS by Arthur Miller
1980 THE HAPPY JOURNEY by Thornton Wilder
MAN OF DESTINY by George Bernard Shaw
1981 FAMILY ALBUM by David Newby
RELATIVELY SPEAKING by Alan Ayckbourn
1982 THE CANTERVILLE GHOST by Nicholas Allen, based on the story by Oscar Wilde
A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS by Robert Bolt
1983 ROBIN HOOD by Nicholas Allen. An entertainment with music
LOVERS by Brian Friel
1984 THE HAPPY JOURNEY by Thornton Wilder
1984/85 KING ARTHUR by Nicholas Allen. An entertainment with music
THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST by Oscar Wilde
1985/86 THE CANTERVILLE GHOST by Nicholas Allen, based on the story by Oscar Wilde
THE GLASS MENAGERIE by Tennessee Williams
1986/87 SONGS AND DREAMS by Nicholas Allen
SAME TIME, NEXT YEAR by Bernard Slade
1987/88 DICK WHITTINGTON AND HIS CAT by Sean Aita
LOOK BACK IN ANGER by John Osborne
1988/89 THE WIDOW'S DIAMONDS by Nicholas Allen
THE PRIVATE EAR by Peter Schaffer
1989/90 ROBIN HOOD by Nicholas Allen. An entertainment with music
IN PRAISE OF LOVE by Terence Rattigan
1990/91 THE HAPPY JOURNEY by Thornton Wilder
DANGEROUS OBSESSION by N. F. Crisp
1991/92 RICHARD THE LIONHEART by Nicholas Allen
THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH by Sean Aita
THE ZOO STORY by Edward Albee
1992/93 SONGS AND DREAMS by Nicholas Allen
STAGE BY STAGE by Jennie Graham
I OUGHT TO BE IN PICTURES by Neil Simon
1993/94 TREASURE ISLAND by Sean Aita
SHERLOCK HOLMES INVESTIGATES by Ingrid Statman
RELATIVELY SPEAKING by Alan Ayckbourn
1994/95 FAMILY ALBUM by David Newby
FREDDY AND THE CLOVEN HOOF by Adam Bridges
LOVERS by Brian Friel

1995/96 THE CANTERVILLE GHOST by Nicholas Allen
 DRACULA by Sean Aita
 MY CHILDREN! MY AFRICA! by Athol Fugard
 1996/97 CRUSOE by Nicholas Allen, based on the novel by Daniel Defoe
 LOVE HURTS by Sean Aita
 THE GLASS MENAGERIE by Tennessee Williams
 1997/98 HUCKLEBERRY FINN by Sean Aita
 SUGAR AND SPICE by Philip Dart
 ALL MY SONS by Arthur Miller
 1998/99 THE SWORD AND THE CROWN by Sean Aita
 BOTTLING OUT by Philip Dart
 BUTTERFLIES ARE FREE by Leonard Gershe
 1999/00 BANANAS by Sean Aita and Nicholas Allen
 DANCE CLASS by Clive Duncan
 THE BROWNING VERSION by Terence Rattigan
 2000/01 AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS by Sean Aita
 MILLENNIUM by Sean Aita
 BLUE GIRL by Deborah Aita
 2001/02 HOTMAIL FROM HELSINKI by Judy Upton
 ROMY AND JULIAN by Clive Duncan
 THE LAST YANKEE by Arthur Miller
 2002/03 A PERFECT MATCH by Sean Aita
 A DOG'S LIFE by Sean Aita
 DANGEROUS OBSESSION by N.J Crisp
 2003/04 STREETS OF LONDON by Sean Aita
 WILD WEEKEND by Clive Duncan
 BUTTERFLIES ARE FREE by Leonard Gershe
 2004/05 THE CANTERVILLE GHOST adapted from Oscar Wilde by Clive Duncan
 SUGAR AND SPICE by Philip Dart
 MACBETH adapted from Shakespeare by Clive Duncan
 2005/06 AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS by Sean Aita
 ROMY & JULIAN by Clive Duncan
 THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND a Woody Guthrie Folk Musicale devised by David M. Lutken
 2006/07 REVOLTING BRITONS by Clive Duncan
 DANCE CLASS by Clive Duncan
 LOOK BACK IN ANGER by John Osborne
 2007/08 VIRTUAL HEROES by Clive Duncan
 WILD WEEKEND by Clive Duncan
 PITCH BLACK by Clive Duncan
 2008/09 PERFECT MATCH by Sean Aita
 LITTLE GIRL LIES by Claudia Leaf
 VIRGINS by John Retallack
 2009/10 FAME GAME by Philip Dart
 SACRIFICE by Claudia Leaf
 MACBETH by William Shakespeare adapted by Clive Duncan
 2010/11 ROB AND THE HOODIES by Sean Aita
 ROMY & JULIAN by Clive Duncan
 BUTTERFLIES ARE FREE by Leonard Gershe
 2011/12 THE SWITCH by Philip Dart
 DISCONNECTED by Adam Barnard
 PITCH BLACK by Clive Duncan
 2012/13 AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS by Sean Aita
 JEKYLL'S POTION by James Cawood
 A PICTURE by Clive Duncan
 2013/14 VIRTUAL HEROES by Clive Duncan
 POPULAR by Philip Dart
 PRETTY SHREWD by Clive Duncan



act *dance* *sing*

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Hello there,

Have you watched “**Dancing Stars**”? Perhaps even voted by phone or SMS? Got angry when your favourite didn’t get enough votes?

What are your immediate thoughts when you hear “Dance Class”? (tick if applicable)

- A ballroom dancing class – learning how to waltz, boogie, tango?
- A ballet class – the dancers in tutus, hair tightly pulled back, wearing their pointed shoes?
- Folk dancing, as in Polka, Highland Reels, Tarantella, Czardas, Square or Line Dance?
- Aerobic jazz dance workouts?
- Samba parades like the Carneval in Rio?
- Cool clubbing chill-outs?
- Circle dance in kindergarten?
- Therapeutic dancing?
- Religious dancing?
- War dances of Native Americans?
- Animals’ mating dances? Or ... what else?

Non-verbal communication through movement and gestures – one of the oldest rituals in the world. It is not restricted to humans, either. Hey, don’t worry, I’m not going to give you a biology or sociology class now, just think about it!

Dancing is communication, **people making contact**, finding ways to each other - through bodily movements, through swaying and rocking. The effect is the same for all ages and (most) physiques: having fun, enjoying themselves – in different ways, each to their own.

For a lot of people it is even more: the joy of being alive and in harmony within oneself, the feeling of physical and emotional well-being.

Those of you who are aware of their preferred **learning style** might know that they are ‘**kinesthetic**’ – kinesthetic learners like, no, **need** movement in order to learn efficiently and effectively. They are usually good at any kind of sport, they are fit, athletic and aware of their bodies. Physical or emotional ‘movement’ (kinesthetics need **action and emotion**) is instrumental for storing content in their memories!

Therefore, **fun** is not only laughing at a joke or having a good time – fun is **opening the mind** to learn more effectively – and communicate with others. Just think of the UK and the USA, where sports and PE is very high up on the list of priorities in most school, college and university curricula, following the classic ‘**mens sana in corpore sano**’ principle.

As you watch (or work through) the play, you'll meet four young people, each of whom is bogged down with problems. This, in turn, affects their performance at school, which in turn affects their behaviour, their way of communicating with the people around them – the way they come across to their parents, teachers, fellow students, friends. Sadly, they seem caught in this **downward spiral**, unable to communicate their problems to others, unable to get clear about themselves. Until ... one of the teachers realizes the potential within them and helps them to release it.

Ms Gordon cares, **respects the teenagers for the persons they are** – yet she very clearly communicates to them that their behaviour, their academic performance, is unacceptable. Contrary to the Deputy Head, or some parents, she is not saying: your behaviour is bad, therefore you are a bad person. She helps them build up their **self-esteem**, encourages them, believes in them – and provides an opportunity to apply themselves, 'get really into it', channel their energy into positive areas, and **discover the strengths within** them.

Dancing as therapeutic, educational measure – this play shows in an impressive way the difference it made to our four protagonists. Could it make a difference ... to **you**?

Obviously there is a lot of background reading on the subject – if you're interested, surf through the internet, or find books, either academic (psychology, sociology, etc.) or more popular (like "Ballroom Dancing for Idiots" or some such). The message will be the same: **communication, making contact through movement!**

So ... one, two, three, stretch, stretch, tap, tap, and bend
... and back, two, three, stretch, stretch, tap, tap ...
(... ouch, I ache all over, I think I'll sit the next one out!)

As always, enjoy the play – and do let us know if you liked it.
(schooltours@englishtheatre.at)

We look forward to hearing from you,

Cheers,

Helena Hirsch

Note to teachers:

There are some straightforward comprehension questions at the end of the text just to check overall understanding. More exploitation strategies, vocabulary work and plenty of activities for your students to put their competencies and language skills to work can be found in the extensive worksheet (available for download from www.schooltours.at as from September 2014).

CHARACTERS IN THE PLAY:

Tree

Liz

Gavin

Julie

As these four are telling the story, they also play:

Miss Gordon

The Dancers

Jack, Tree's stepfather

The Deputy Head

The lads in the class

Cinema staff

Musical notes ...

- The music used for the dances in this play are contemporary rock and *not* classical.
- The two longer raps are underscored with sampling (= *taking brief segments of sound (from a song, movie or elsewhere) and using that sound to form another sound or musical piece.*

DANCE CLASS

by Clive Duncan

The acting area is empty except for four chairs which are placed back in front of the backdrop. On each of these chairs is a baseball cap and a pair of sunglasses. Beneath one of the chairs is some form of sound system.

Four people, two boys and two girls, appear. They are dressed casually. They go to the chairs and, using the seats of the chairs as drums, begin to beat an orchestrated rhythm. It's lively and vibrant.

One of them, Tree, walks slowly downstage - his attitude showing defiance, cheek¹. There's an attempt to be cool. It all looks a little menacing². He does not smile and he looks at the audience, weighing them up³ for a moment.

The music stops abruptly and the other three come downstage to join Tree -

TREE: I'm Tree. It's not my real name. I don't like my real name, so everyone calls me Tree. This is my school. It's all right, if you like that sort of thing. I don't. I can't wait to leave. I live with my Mum and ... stepfather. Jack, his name is. We've reached this agreement⁴, me and Jack; I hate him and he hates me. I can't wait to leave there either...

LIZ: I'm Liz. I'm new here. I only moved to this town six months ago when my dad got a different job. I miss my friends and I want to go home. I'm lonely. I don't fit in this school. I'm a fish out of water.

GAVIN: I'm Gavin. I like it here. I mean: school. I don't mean lessons – Maths and History and Geography and French and Science. I like the people. I don't mean the teachers, although some are okay. I mean people like Tree. He's a great bloke. That's the problem. The teachers say...

TREE/LIZ/JULIE:(*rapping*)

He's a sad boy, a mad boy
A player and a bad boy
Bring you more trouble
Than you never ever had boy
When it comes to friends
Gotta be a better chooser
'Cos you stick around with him
And you'll always be the loser

¹ Herausforderung, Unverschämtheit

² gefährlich, bedrohend

³ abschätzen

⁴ wir haben dieses Abkommen (Übereinkunft)

GAVIN: But Tree's been a good friend to me. My mother, my Mum, she's very busy. She has to work all the time. Ever since Dad died. And when she gets home, she's very tired. I wish she could be at home more. When I get home there's no one there. That's why I like coming here. Tree's cool, he's fun, he's alive, he's a joker, he's off the wall, he's left field¹, he's...

TREE: Be quiet, Gavin.

GAVIN: Sorry, Tree.

JULIE: My name is Julie.

There is a moment's pause. The others, as one, turn their heads to look at Julie, expecting her to say more. Julie shrugs.

TREE: I'm in the same class as Gavin. The other two ... they're in the same year, different classes. The one on the end, I think she's a bit ... (*he screws his forefinger into his temple*²). She doesn't say much. The other one, she hasn't been here very long. I've never really spoken to her. She looks ... good.

GAVIN: (*Wolf-whistles*³)

TREE: Gavin!

LIZ: I don't know these people. Don't think I want to.

JULIE: (*Shrugs*)

TREE: We're in ...

TREE/LIZ/GAVIN/JULIE: Detention⁴!

GAVIN: We've all got to stay behind ...

LIZ: When school has finished ...

TREE: As a punishment. Me? I dared to challenge authority. I cheeked an elder⁵. I spoke rudely and defiantly to the History teacher. She said; (*he becomes the history teacher*) Today, we are going to look at the events leading up to and causing the downfall of the Holy Roman Empire⁶. I said: Why? She said: What? I said: What has that got to do with my life? She couldn't tell me. That's why I'm here.

GAVIN: And I laughed. That's why I'm here.

LIZ: I didn't hand in my Biology homework on time. I thought we had Biology tomorrow. I'm not used to the timetable yet. That's why I'm here.

There's nothing from Julie. The other three, as one, turn their heads to look at her. Julie blows a large bubble with her bubble gum.

TREE/LIZ/GAVIN: (*rapping*)

Whatcha doin'⁷, girl? (Whatcha doin', girl?)

Is that gum in your mouth? (Are you chewin', girl?)

¹ er ist witzig, dynamisch, ein irrer Typ, verrückt, übercool

² sich an die Stirn tippen (eig.: den Finger an der Schläfe drehen)

³ (nach)pfeifen

⁴ nachsitzen

⁵ ich war unverschämt zu einem Vorgesetzten (Erwachsenen)

⁶ Heiliges Römisches Reich

⁷ (sl.) what are you doing

Hey now you're in trouble, don't know that it's a rule
It's a instant detention if your chewin' in school
So you'd better not blow those bubbles no more –
You better spit it out quick before I count to four
One... two....
Julie spits the gum out ...
Uh oh!! ... Miss! She spat it on the floor!

LIZ: Today, detention is being held ...

GAVIN: Here ...

LIZ: In the Gym. With Miss Gordon. The PE teacher.

TREE: We like her. She's cool.

LIZ: She's nice.

GAVIN: She won't make us do our homework or give us lines to write.

JULIE: Yeah.

TREE: So, it's cool.

LIZ: Cool.

GAVIN: Cool.

JULIE: Cool!

TREE: Well, it should have been cool.

TREE/LIZ/GAVIN/JULIE: But it wasn't.

LIZ: As soon as she arrived she started on us¹.

JULIE: She said ... (*Julie becomes Miss Gordon*) You four again. Why are you in detention so often? Liz, this is your fifth time this term.

LIZ: It's because I'm new here. I haven't got used to things yet.

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: You've been here two terms now. If you're not used to things, it's because you don't want to get used to them.

LIZ: Yes, Miss.

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: As for you, Tree – you make me despair.

TREE: Yes, Miss.

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: And Gavin. You're just as bad.

GAVIN: Yes, Miss.

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: Don't "yes miss" me! Do you think I'm stupid? You get into trouble, for whatever reason and you're sent here as a punishment. And whatever I say to you you're going to reply; yes miss, no miss, please miss, sorry miss, until I leave you alone. Don't you think I know that trick? Don't you think I used that trick when I was your age?

TREE/LIZ/GAVIN: Yes, Miss!

JULIE: *Giggles as Julie - and then as Miss Gordon*: Julie – stop giggling! That's better. Listen. When I found out you were all in detention again, I looked up

¹ loslegen

your school records. The thing is, when you come to my class, here in the Gym or out on the field, you all work hard. You try your best. You enjoy yourselves. But your records show that you are often late for school, often absent, often in detention. Your exam results are ... not very good. I don't understand this, because I see bright, energetic young people¹ in front of me. You're not stupid, not even you, Gavin. You're not bad. Some of the teachers think you're lazy. I don't. I think you're bored.

TREE: We all agreed.

TREE/LIZ/GAVIN/JULIE: (*rapping*)

I am bored, he is bored, she is bored, and we,
We're all bored, 'cos this is boring, BORING - totally!
Boring lessons, boring teachers and especially
The chronically dull and boring chronicals of Roman History
Don't know what History did for the Romans
But it's boring the pants of me².

GAVIN: Miss Gordon said...

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: You need something to wake you up to a whole new world³, something to broaden your horizons⁴ ...

TREE: Tickets to a football match!

LIZ: A fashion show!

JULIE: A trip to the sea!

GAVIN: Are we going to have a party, Miss?

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: I've got two friends...

LIZ: Miss Gordon said...

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: They are professional dancers, but they also teach, take workshops. I've asked them to come into school to teach you ... Dance.

TREE/LIZ/GAVIN/JULIE: Dance?

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: Dance.

TREE: We laughed.

All four fall about laughing at the very idea⁵. Gavin and Tree begin to waltz and they all laugh more. Liz disco-dances a little and they laugh even more. Julie dances a few ballet steps and they all laugh again. Then, all together, they stop.

TREE: Ah, come on, Miss, you're not serious.

JULIE: Dancing is daft⁶.

GAVIN: It's for girls.

LIZ: Not this girl.

¹ blitzgescheite, energiegeladene junge Menschen

² langweilt mich zu Tode

³ etwas, wo sich (für die Jugendlichen) eine ganz neue Welt auftut

⁴ den Horizont erweitern

⁵ schon allein die Idee, der Gedanke ...

⁶ blöd, gestört

TREE: Ah, come on, Miss, my stepfather wouldn't let me...

JULIE: I get dizzy...

GAVIN: I've got a bad leg.

LIZ: Time of the month¹.

TREE: Ah, come on, Miss! You cannot do this!

JULIE: It's not fair!

GAVIN: We'll be laughed at!

LIZ: You can't make us!

JULIE: Miss Gordon said (*as Miss Gordon:*) I don't understand the problem.

May I remind you of our trip to the theatre - when I took you all to see The London Contemporary Dance Company. You all loved it.

TREE: That was true.

They bring the chairs down and are at the theatre and we hear the music of what they are watching.

LIZ: It was a month ago. All our year² went.

GAVIN: We didn't think we'd like it ...

TREE: But we did.

JULIE: Wow!

LIZ: It's beautiful!

TREE: Look at those blokes! They've got more muscles than Thor!

GAVIN: So have the women!

JULIE: Wow!

LIZ: This is terrific!

TREE: It's incredible - see how they move...

GAVIN: Will you look at the legs on her!

TREE: We talked of nothing else on the coach journey home...

They make the coach with the chairs.

JULIE: I wish I could dance like that.

LIZ: I wish I could look that beautiful.

TREE: They were all so fit - so athletic.

GAVIN: Especially the women.

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: You see, you all enjoyed it, you all loved it...

LIZ: Watching something isn't the same as doing it.

TREE: You have to be fit, strong, an athlete...

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: You are. I've already said how dedicated³ I think you are when it comes to sport and PE.

GAVIN: But Miss Gordon, we're good at...

He and Tree play football.

TREE: To me! To me!

¹ ich habe gerade die Regel

² unser gesamtes Jahr (d.h. Jahrgang, alle Parallelklassen)

³ eifrig, mit Eifer bei der Sache

GAVIN: Tree!

Tree passes to Gavin who shoots and scores.

TREE: Goal!

LIZ: And we're good at...

She plays netball with Julie.

JULIE: To me! To me!

LIZ: Julie!

Julie passes to Liz who shoots and scores.

LIZ: Goal!

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: Exactly! Dance is like another sport. Your first class is tomorrow lunchtime, in the Gym. I'll see you then. Don't be late. Detention is over. And she left us...

They are quiet for a moment. They look at each other.

GAVIN: Are you going to go? I'm not going. Are you? I'm not.

LIZ: No.

JULIE: *(Shakes her head).*

TREE: Nor me.

GAVIN: Never.

LIZ: No way.

JULIE: *(Shakes her head).*

TREE: Negative!

They all sing/rap:

I won't dance, don't ask me.
I won't dance, don't ask me.
I won't dance, my love, with you.

I can't believe the way you're treating me
Treating me so superficially¹
It's hard enough as it is for me to see
What it really is that I want to be
You shove me in a corner – what for
Always locking me out of the door
And now you want me on the dance floor?
Well no way, Jose – 'cos for sure ...
I won't dance, don't ask me.
I won't dance, don't ask me.
I won't dance, my love, with you.

You try and manipulate the masses
You try and do the same to our classes
You can pick on² the boys and the lasses

¹ oberflächlich

² herumhacken auf

'Cos their red haired or they just wear glasses
Watch my lips, hear my voice
Give me freedom, give me a choice
Don't make a fuss – don't shout
But I'm just gonna sit this one out¹.

I won't dance, don't ask me.
I won't dance, don't ask me.
I won't dance, my love, with you.

LIZ: And did we go to the dance class?

TREE: Of course we did. We had no choice. No say in the matter².

GAVIN: But we weren't happy.

JULIE: We decided to tell them...

LIZ: We didn't need a dance class...

GAVIN: Because we know how to dance already.

TREE: So, we shuffled³ into the Gym, at lunchtime and we waited...

Music - strong and stirring⁴, heralding⁵ the arrival of the Dancers...

Julie and Gavin become the Dancers. They put on the baseball caps and the sunshades and begin to walk downstage. Physically they are very aware of themselves⁶; every movement is placed, controlled, balanced⁷. They are both very gladiatorial⁸. During this...

LIZ: And then the Dancers arrived...

TREE: They...

LIZ: Stepped...

TREE: Strode⁹ ...

LIZ: Strutted¹⁰ ...

TREE: Swaggered¹¹ ...

LIZ: Into the Gym.

TREE: The way they moved, you could tell that they knew exactly who they were...

LIZ: ...Where they were going.

¹ dankend darauf verzichten (eig.: etwas aussitzen, auslassen)

² wir hatten in dieser Angelegenheit nichts zu sagen, wir wurden nicht gefragt

³ hineinschleifen, schlurfen

⁴ intensiv und anregend

⁵ ankündigen

⁶ sie haben ein starkes Körperbewusstsein

⁷ jede Bewegung ist gezielt, kontrolliert und koordiniert

⁸ wie Gladiatoren (ein starkes, selbstbewusstes Auftreten)

⁹ mit zügigen Schritten

¹⁰ angeberischer, selbstbewusster Gang

¹¹ schreiten, stolzieren

TREE: They had presence. She was beautiful...

LIZ: So was he.

The music continues. Liz and Tree put on the baseball caps and sunglasses and become the dancers...

GAVIN: They looked mean... tough...

JULIE: They moved...

GAVIN: With attitude. With just a hint of "Don't mess with me!"¹

JULIE: They were fluid². They had fluidity and they flowed across the floor. He was beautiful...

GAVIN: So was she.

Music stops.

GAVIN: They said...

DANCERS: Hey.

TREE *as dancer*: You must be Natalie's friends.

GAVIN: Natalie?

LIZ *as dancer*: Miss Gordon.

JULIE: We're her students.

Tree rips off his baseball cap and glasses...

TREE: And look, nothing personal, but this is a waste of time³. We can dance already.

LIZ *as dancer*: Really?

TREE: She said. Her voice was deep, husky⁴, sexy.

GAVIN: It made my heart beat faster.

LIZ *as dancer*: Show me.

Music. Cheap, tinny⁵ disco music. All four dance to it. They dance until they become self-conscious⁶ and then they feel embarrassed⁷ and stop. The music stops. Gavin and Julie become the Dancers...

JULIE *as dancer*: That was ... okay ...

GAVIN *as dancer*: It's a start. Watch this.

Music - it's exciting with a strong rhythm, infectious⁸. The two dancers dance together to it. It's highly skilled and controlled⁹. Liz and Tree watch. After it's finished...

TREE: When they danced...

LIZ: ... Together...

¹ mit einem Anflug von 'mit mir nicht'

² fließend

³ das ist reine Zeitverschwendung

⁴ dunkel, heiser, erregend

⁵ dünner, blecherner Klang

⁶ Hemmungen bekommen

⁷ sich genießen

⁸ mitreißend (d.h. ein Rhythmus, dem man sich nicht entziehen kann)

⁹ sehr kunstvoll und beherrscht (unter Kontrolle)

TREE: It was like they were talking to each other. It was a conversation.

LIZ: They were communicating.

TREE: But it was more than that; the way they moved – one minute they were flying.

LIZ: The next they were lovers...

TREE: ... then warriors.

GAVIN: When it ended they asked us: What did you think?

TREE: It was ... cool.

LIZ: Yeah, cool.

GAVIN: Cool for school.

JULIE: *(Nods her head in agreement)* They said: Do you want to try?

TREE: *(Shrugs)*

LIZ: *(Shrugs)*

GAVIN: *(Shrugs)*

JULIE: *(Shrugs)*

TREE: But we had no choice. No say in the matter.

They run to the back of the acting area and begin a synchronised¹ warm-up. We hear a simple rhythm - it could be drum beats or a simple bass riff². We hear a voice ...

VOICE: Shoulders up and down and up and down and up and down. Left shoulder right shoulder left shoulder right shoulder left and right and left and right. Head down head up head down head up to the right and left and right and left. Right arm swing and round and round etc.

They work part-way through the body until it all stops quite abruptly. They all sit on the chairs in attitudes of exhaustion³ except Tree who brings his chair downstage.

TREE: We were all tired when we had finished. But it was a good tiredness. For the rest of the day I couldn't concentrate on any of the lessons. All I had in my head were those dancers and I wanted to come home, here, to my room, to be alone with my thoughts. When they danced, glided, floated, fought, they were communicating. But it was more than that. When they danced it was like they were speaking to me. I saw it clearly. Have you ever heard a song, or read a poem or a book, or even seen a painting and you've thought – yeah, that's what I feel, that's me, I understand that? That's what I felt, only this was big-time, huge, massive⁴. For the first time in my life I knew that I wanted something. Really wanted ...

¹ gleichzeitige (synchrone) Aufwärmübungen

² einfache Bassmelodie (Lauf)

³ (körperliche) Erschöpfung

⁴ irre stark, massiv, durchschlagend

Tree takes a few steps that we've seen the dancers do. It's competent although a little shaky¹. He gets bolder² and picks up his chair which he uses as his partner. He tries a few more steps before losing his balance and the chair crashes to the floor.

GAVIN *as Jack*: What's going on up there?

TREE: Nothing, Jack. I just tripped³.

GAVIN *as Jack*: What are you doing? It sounded like a herd of elephants.

TREE: I wasn't doing anything, Jack. I fell over. That's all.

GAVIN *as Jack*: Well, don't. You're a clumsy oaf⁴.

TREE: Idiot!

GAVIN *as Jack*: You what?

TREE: I said, it's hot.

GAVIN *as Jack*: I'll give you hot⁵. Another sound out of you and I'll be up there, do you hear?

Tree deliberately⁶ dances a few more steps and purposely slams⁷ the chair down. Gavin, still at the back, jumps to his feet, knocking his chair over backwards. Tree crouches⁸ to protect himself. Liz comes forward.

LIZ: The next day when I got to the Gym, Tree was already there.

Tree sits on the chair and begins to rub his stomach.

LIZ: You're early. You must like dancing.

TREE: It's all right.

LIZ: Are you in pain?

TREE: Yeah. My ... body aches all over. What about you?

LIZ: I'm really stiff. But I enjoyed it, yesterday. It was fun working with you. And Julie and Gavin, of course.

TREE: Yeah. It's funny that we've been together in so many detentions and we've never really spoken to each other.

LIZ: Yeah.

TREE: Yeah.

They don't know what to say to each other.

LIZ *to audience*: I don't know what to say now. He's looking at me and I can't think of a thing to say. I feel ... stupid.

TREE *to audience*: I wish I hadn't said that – about never speaking to each other. Now she's expecting me to talk to her...

¹ geschickt, aber ungeübt

² mutiger (mit mehr Selbstvertrauen)

³ ich bin gestolpert

⁴ ungeschickter Tölpel

⁵ ich werd' dir gleich 'heiß' geben

⁶ absichtlich, mit Absicht

⁷ bewusst hinknallen

⁸ zusammenkauern

LIZ: Dancing!

TREE: Yeah. Dancing – it’s good. What did you think of the dance class yesterday?

LIZ: It was hard work, but I think that’s why I liked it. Miss Gordon was right about us working hard in PE. That’s the only time, in school, that I feel happy – I can really push myself¹. I’d rather be back at my old school, with my real friends, I suppose. I was so frightened on my first day here. I remember ...

She continues to speak although we do not hear her. Tree turns to the audience ...

TREE: I always thought that Liz was stuck-up², that she thought she was better than the rest of us, but she’s not like that at all. She’s really ... you know ... cool. When she speaks she has this funny way of bringing the side of her mouth down ... Ruby-red³ lips. She’s telling me her life story, here, pouring her heart out⁴. But why to me ...?

LIZ: ... And I cried - all night. I’ve never told anyone. *(To the audience:)* Why have I told him about that? Tree, of all people. He must think I’m such a wimp⁵. *(To Tree:)* You liked the class, yesterday, I was watching you.

TREE: Yeah? I don’t know if I can explain it. Watching a dance company was something, but actually dancing is something else. It’s like I’ve picked up a saxophone and found that I can play it. Just from that one class I’ve found something so strong. Nobody around here expects me to amount to anything⁶. It’s the same with my mother and stepfather. I was beginning to believe it myself...

Tree continues speaking although we cannot hear him. Liz turns to the audience.

LIZ: This is Tree I am talking to ... the hard case - the head case⁷. He roars and swears and swaggers⁸. But here he is - telling me about his home, his stepfather and ... dancing – as he speaks, his hands flow through the air, his eyes are alight⁹, he’s animated, alive¹⁰ – he’s dancing now, even though he’s standing still. I like his shoulders. I wonder what it would be like to rest my hands upon his shoulders now? Why is he telling me all this?

TREE: ... And I’ve always been scared of Jack. Until now. *(To the audience:)* Why have I told her that? She’ll think I’ve gone soft¹¹. *(To Liz:)* The others are late.

¹ da kann ich aus mir herausgehen, mich zu Höchstleistungen anspornen

² eingebildet (sich als jemand Besserer empfinden)

³ (rubin)rote Lippen

⁴ das Herz ausschütten

⁵ Waschlappen, Weichei

⁶ ...dass ich irgendetwas wert bin, dass aus mir was wird

⁷ der schwere Fall – der Fall für den Psychiater

⁸ er tobt und flucht und gibt an (d.h. spielt den Halbstarken)

⁹ seine Augen leuchten

¹⁰ er ist so lebhaft, energiegeladen

¹¹ zum Weichei werden

LIZ: Yeah. (*To the audience:*) Why is he looking at me like that?
 TREE *to the audience*: I think I like her, but she's giving me that icy stare¹ that shouts: keep off!
 LIZ *to the audience*: He's really nice, but I know he's not interested in me. That's not a smile, it's more of a sneer².
 TREE AND LIZ: *To the audience*: Oh, well...
Julie and Gavin come downstage. They over-exaggerate³ their stiffness and walk like bound mummies⁴.
 GAVIN *with each step*: Ow! Ow! Ow! Ow! Ow!
 JULIE: I'm so stiff I can't even chew gum.
 GAVIN: I liked it better when we were all bored. Can't we tell them we don't want to do this dancing anymore?
 TREE: Liz and I were just saying how much we enjoyed it.
 LIZ: Yeah.
 GAVIN: You've got to be joking ...
 JULIE: Even my hair aches!
 TREE: You've just got to loosen up⁵ ...
Tree picks up a chair and begins to beat a gentle rhythm ...
 TREE: Shoulders up and down and up and down and up and down. Left shoulder right shoulder left shoulder right shoulder left and right and left and right. Head down head up head down head up to the right and left and right and left. Right arm swing and round and round etc. ...
They join in, slowly and painfully, until, bit by bit, their bodies loosen up and they get into the full swing⁶ of it. It stops and we begin to hear a new piece of music. Gavin becomes a Dancer.
 GAVIN *as Dancer*: Okay. Listen to this track, because we're going to put some moves to it – choreograph it. And then, maybe, in a few weeks, you could perform it in front of the school. What do you think?

Music

TREE: This was it. This was what I wanted. I said: It'll be cool - a laugh - a gas⁷!
 LIZ: And we said ...
 LIZ/ GAVIN/ JULIE: No!
 TREE: Come on! This is a chance – a chance to do something. We come here every day, we mooch from lesson to lesson⁸, using just enough energy to stay out of trouble, and then we go home. Boring. Nobody at school expects us to

¹ kalter, abweisender Blick

² spöttischer Grinsen

³ übertreiben, überzeichnen

⁴ einbandagierte Mumien

⁵ lockerer werden

⁶ ganz bei der Sache, voll dabei

⁷ das wird cool, eine Hetz' (Gaudi), zum Schreien

⁸ wir schleppen uns von einer Stunde zur nächsten

amount to anything. But we can show them. We can carve¹ our names on the wall: Tree was here. And Gavin. And Liz. And Julie. And this is how we'll carve them - by dancing - so they'll never forget us.

GAVIN: We said ...

LIZ/ GAVIN/JULIE: No!

TREE: I got heavy². I said: None of you have any friends ...

LIZ: I knew I shouldn't have told you!

TREE: But if we do this together, we'll be a crew³ – tight! Together. Look around, meet your new crew.

They all look at each other.

JULIE: We said ...

LIZ/ GAVIN/ JULIE: Get lost⁴!

TREE: I couldn't let the opportunity slip away⁵, so I said: If we dance in front of the whole school, every boy will want to go out with either Liz or Julie and every girl will want to go out with me or Gavin ...

LIZ/ GAVIN/ JULIE: We'll do it!

They begin to move slowly to the music. During which ...

TREE: It was great, it was fun. I could do this, I could dance. It was better than swimming, running, football, cycling. It was better than all of them put together. We started to learn technical terms⁶. Plié⁷!

They all plié.

LIZ: We rehearsed every lunchbreak, and then we started to practise after school. It was really enjoyable. Levée⁸!

They all levée.

JULIE: It was ... fun. Second position plié!

GAVIN: It was a laugh, all right. But I couldn't dance for toffee⁹. Even Julie was better than I was. Liz was good, but Tree was brilliant. First position sitting down and having a rest!

They stop and rest.

TREE: Although we were loving every minute of it, we soon realised that it wasn't going to be easy, it wasn't going to be plain sailing¹⁰.

LIZ: The Fates were against us¹¹ ...

¹ einritzen (sich verewigen)

² ich wurde deutlicher (mehr Nachdruck)

³ ein Team

⁴ vergiss es (“schleich’ dich”)

⁵ die Gelegenheit vorbeiziehen lassen

⁶ Fachausdrücke

⁷ leicht in die Knie gehen

⁸ gerade (aufgerichtet) stehen

⁹ (sl.) nicht um's Verrecken, überhaupt nicht

¹⁰ einfach, ohne Stolpersteine

¹¹ das Schicksal war gegen uns

GAVIN: Everyone was against us ...

JULIE: Especially ...

TREE/LIZ/GAVIN/JULIE: ... The Deputy Head¹!

LIZ: How shall we describe the Deputy Head?

They all become the Deputy Head as they describe him ...

TREE: A face of stone ...

LIZ: Daggers in his eyes² ...

GAVIN: A razor for a tongue³ ...

JULIE: And his left shoe squeaked.

TREE/LIZ/GAVIN/JULIE: Squeeeeeek!

They hold the images they've created of the deputy head for a moment – it's exaggerated, making him a mixture of Ghengis Khan and Richard the Third⁴. Tree breaks out of the tableau⁵ giving us a more subtle⁶, human version of the Deputy Head. He squeaks across the acting area ...

TREE *as Deputy Head*: What's going on here? You boy, what do you think you're doing? What's your name? Who's in charge here?

Julie steps forward.

TREE *as Deputy Head*: Ah, Miss Gordon. Perhaps you could tell me the purpose of this rabble-rousing racket⁷?

JULIE: Miss Gordon said, (*as Miss Gordon*:) This is a dance class, Deputy Head. It is something that I've arranged.

TREE *as Deputy Head*: Ah, the famous dance class. Yes, I've heard much about this famous dance class. Can't help but hear the raucous cacophony⁸ - that terrible sound that is supposed to be music! It's a waste of school resources⁹, if you ask me.

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: I wasn't asking you, but if you must know, apart from the electricity used to run the sound system, this is costing the school nothing at all.

TREE *as Deputy Head*: That is where you are wrong, my dear.

GAVIN: And he squeaked up close to Miss Gordon ...

LIZ: Until they were almost nose to nose ...

¹ Stellvertreter des Direktors (Administrator)

² stechende Augen (wie Dolche)

³ eine messerscharfe Zunge (Rasierklinge)

⁴ eine Mischung aus dem grausamen Mongolenherrscher Dschingis Khan und dem brutalen, verkrüppelten engl. König

⁵ aus dem Standbild heraustreten

⁶ eine subtilere, realistischere Darstellung

⁷ aufrührerischer (aufhetzerischer) Wirbel

⁸ unangenehm laute Missklänge

⁹ Budget, Ressourcen

SEASON 2014/15

8 Sept – 19 Oct 2014

World Premiere of the English Version of BUTTERBROT

CHICKENSHIT by Gabriel Barylli

This heartwarming and witty comedy follows the lives of three friends, as they discuss their views on life, art, relationships and women and how to eliminate possibly the most dangerous threat to their overall happiness: passionate love! Martin, Stefan and Peter are sharing a flat and everything is running smoothly in this “male” household until one day Martin meets the woman of his dreams...

3 Nov – 20 Dec 2014

DIAL „M“ FOR MURDER by Frederick Knott

Frederick Knott's 1950's classic British thriller is a masterpiece of suspense and intricate plotting and became a worldwide success through Hitchcock's film starring Grace Kelly. Wealthy and elegant Sheila Wendice is leading a seemingly happy life with her husband Tony, an ex-tennis player, until one day, she receives a blackmailing letter about a brief affair she had with crime-fiction writer Max Halliday. She hasn't the slightest suspicion that Tony has long been aware of her secret. Wanting revenge as well as her money, he is meticulously planning her murder, perfect alibi included. It all seems to be going according to plan until it falters in the most unexpected way...

26 Jan – 7 March 2015

VENUS IN FUR by David Ives

David Ives' dark comedy centres on frustrated playwright and director, Thomas Novachek, attempting to cast the leading role in his stage adaptation of the famous novella „Venus in Furs” by Austrian writer Leopold von Sacher-Masoch (after whom the term “masochism” was coined). When young actress, Vanda Jordan, arrives several hours late for her audition, Thomas is less than impressed. But Vanda pressurises him into reading with her and her masterful performance flips all Thomas' pre-conceived expectations of the script and turns the session into a tango for dominance between actress and director, woman and man. *Venus in Fur* is a mesmerising, erotic game of submission and domination, blurring the lines between fantasy and reality.

Venus in Fur was adapted for the screen by Roman Polanski in 2012 and filmed with his wife Emmanuelle Seigner.

Not suitable for under 16s

23 March – 30 April 2015

by arrangement with Edward Snape for Fiery Angel Limited

John Buchan and Alfred Hitchcock's

THE 39 STEPS adapted by **Patrick Barlow**, from a concept by Simon Corble and Nobby Dimon

Richard Hannay, a perfect gentleman and dashing hero, meets a mysterious woman at a London theatre, who implores him to take her home with him. She soon confesses to be a spy, hot on the trail of a dangerous organisation. That same night she gets stabbed in his flat and Richard is cast into a mad chase to escape both the police and the mysterious spy organisation, "the 39 Steps", whilst trying to solve the riddle behind her murder.

The 39 Steps has taken the West End and Broadway by storm – a delightfully theatrical tour-de-force with four actors performing all 139 parts.

6 – 10 May 2015

Vienna's English Theatre Youth Ensemble presents

Willy Russell's Musical BLOOD BROTHERS

Willy Russell's award winning musical *Blood Brothers* is a unique combination of a gripping story with a dramatic musical score, which made it a hit in the West End, where it played for 24 years. *Blood Brothers* tells the story of a financially struggling mother who, in desperation, gives away one of her twin boys at birth to her wealthy childless employer. Unaware of their blood ties and despite their vastly different upbringing, the boys grow up to become best friends, and then rivals, both falling in love with the same girl.

26 May – 3 July 2015

Ken Ludwig's FOX ON THE FAIRWAY

Henry Bingham, president of the Quail Valley Country Club, is in a desperate situation. In the midst of preparations for the Annual Inter-Club Golf Tournament, he discovers that his opponent and arch-enemy, 'Dickie' Bell, has managed to lure his best player away to play for his own, opposing, side. This will most certainly result in Henry losing the huge bet he has foolishly wagered if he cannot find an adequate replacement immediately. Luckily he discovers that his newly hired hand Justin, who is in love with Louise, the waitress at the club house, is a surprisingly talented golfer. Justin does not disappoint in the tournament and has a huge lead. But when, close to the end, he learns that Louise has lost the engagement ring he gave her, he starts to unravel and hilarious mayhem ensues.

Vienna's English Theatre – 1080 Vienna, Josefgasse 12 – 01-402 12 60-0

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TREE *as Deputy Head*: It's costing the school very dear¹. You don't see the damage you are causing², do you? You take four lazy, disruptive, anti-social layabouts³ and you reward⁴ them by giving them special dancing lessons. Worse; you intend to parade⁵ these ... hoodlums⁶ in front of the entire school, like celebrities⁷. Now, we have some fine, young, upstanding⁸ students in this school who attain⁹ high marks in all their exams. What do you do for them, Miss Gordon? You do nothing. So, the message we are sending is: work hard and you get nothing, but break all the rules and you'll get a nice surprise. You're opening the floodgates¹⁰ to trouble, Miss Gordon.

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: If what you said was true, Deputy Head, I would agree with you. But the four people in question are not layabouts, nor are they hoodlums. They are bright, energetic, young people who have lost interest in school. As a teacher, I see it as my duty to re-kindle¹¹ that interest. Since starting this dance class not one of the students has been in detention, all homeworks have been completed in time and the standard of their work is said to be improving¹² ...

GAVIN: They had locked horns ...

LIZ: Neither of them were prepared to give way¹³.

TREE *as Deputy Head*: You haven't heard the last of this¹⁴, Miss Gordon. The show will not go on! The Head shall hear of this!

Tree turns triumphantly, and squeaks a few paces away ...

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: The Head already has.

He's stopped in his tracks¹⁵.

TREE *as Deputy Head*: Oh? And what did the Head have to say?

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: The Head said that the dance class was innovative. And then he said; well done, Miss Gordon.

¹ es entsteht großer Schaden für die Schule

² Schaden anrichten

³ vier faule, nicht gesellschaftsfähige Schmarotzer

⁴ belohnen

⁵ vorführen (d.h. sie werden auch noch bewundert)

⁶ Rowdies, Rüppel

⁷ Berühmtheiten (die etwas geleistet haben)

⁸ ordentlich, verantwortungsbewusst

⁹ erreichen, erarbeiten

¹⁰ die Schleusen öffnen

¹¹ wieder entzünden, das Feuer wieder entfachen

¹² die Leistungen verbessern sich ständig

¹³ nachgeben

¹⁴ Sie werden noch über diese Sache hören (d.h. das letzte Wort ist noch nicht gesprochen)

¹⁵ plötzlich, abrupt stehenbleiben

Tree begins to twitch¹ and slowly transform into the Ghengis Khan image of the Deputy Head before squeaking away ...

LIZ/GAVIN: (*Clapping*) Nice one, Miss G!

JULIE *as Miss Gordon (angrily)*: Get on with the dance class!

They snap back in line² and begin slow movements.

TREE: It wasn't just some of the teachers who gave us a hard time.

LIZ: Our classmates ...

GAVIN: Our friends!

LIZ: Gave us stick³, too.

JULIE: They made fun of us ...

LIZ: Picked on us.

GAVIN: Even bullied us.

TREE: But we were tough and we dealt with it – in our own fashion⁴

They strike poses to match ...

JULIE: (*Blows a raspberry⁵*)

LIZ: Get a life⁶!

TREE: Do you want to make something of it⁷?

There's nothing from Gavin and the other three look to him. He curls himself up into a ball...

GAVIN: No! Don't hit me!

TREE: Gavin?

GAVIN: It was terrifying, Tree. They were going to beat me up.

TREE: Who did?

GAVIN: The lads in the class...

Tree, Liz and Julie become the lads in the class...

LIZ: It's Gav!

JULIE: Gavva!

TREE: Gavin! What's all this about you ... dancing?

LIZ: Become a ballerina, have you!?

JULIE: Do you dress up in tights? Girls'tights?

TREE: Of course he does.

LIZ: And Gavin is a girl now.

TREE: He's gay!

JULIE: He's the teacher's pet⁸...

Through the following rap they push Gavin around ...

¹ zucken

² sich schnell wieder in einer Reihe aufstellen

³ runtermachen, quälen, sekkieren

⁴ wir sind damit fertig geworden - auf unsere Art und Weise

⁵ verächtlich schnauben

⁶ sei wieder normal, mach was aus deinem Leben

⁷ hast du was dagegen, passt dir was nicht

⁸ Liebling der Lehrer, Streber

TREE/LIZ/JULIE: (*rapping*)

He's gone soft in the head
Since his Dad dropped dead
Taken up dancing
Twisting and prancing¹
All twirls and swirls²
Just one of the girls
Are you gonna wear a frou-frou tutu³
Maybe model it for me and you-you
We've lost our friend Gavin have you seen her
She'd dressed up like a bloody ballerina!
Like it's not bad enough
That you're acting like a poof⁴!
Maybe we should start calling you Gavina

The gang rough up Gavin.

GAVIN: They said I was a girl.

JULIE: What's wrong with being a girl?

GAVIN: Nothing. If you are a girl.

TREE: I was angry. (*To Gavin*) Don't worry, Gavin. I'll sort them out⁵. No one pushes my friend around. I'll give them all a good hiding⁶!

LIZ: Then you'll be as bad as they are. You don't have to resort to violence⁷.

TREE: Ha! The voice of reason⁸. What do you suggest?

LIZ: We just have to talk to them, that's all. Make them understand. Ask them politely to stop bullying Gavin.

TREE: So, we sought them out⁹. Followed them to their hideout¹⁰ in the corner of the Geography room. We faced them. Squared up to them¹¹. Liz stepped forward...

LIZ: You leave Gavin alone...

TREE: She said, in a civilised manner...

GAVIN: But they laughed at us ...

JULIE: Swore at us...

¹ schnelle, hüpfende (Tanz)schritte

² sich drehen und verrenken

³ Ballettröckchen

⁴ Schwuler

⁵ denen werd'ich es zeigen, die werde ich schon zurechtbiegen

⁶ ordentlich verprügeln

⁷ du musst nicht auf Gewalt zurückgreifen

⁸ die Stimme der Vernunft

⁹ aufsuchen, sie stellen

¹⁰ Versteck

¹¹ sie konfrontieren

TREE: Threatened us. Liz tried a different approach¹ ...

LIZ: You leave Gavin alone ... or else!

They jump into comic-book fighting poses ...

LIZ: Biff!

TREE: Kerpow!

GAVIN: Bop!

JULIE: Ker-runch!

TREE: They didn't bother us again.

GAVIN: Much.

TREE: I took Gavin to the cinema, to cheer him up² ...

They're in a cinema and Liz and Julie become cinema staff.

TREE: Gav had no money, so I paid. Two tickets to see Iron Man 3 and a bucket of popcorn. I blew my entire week's pocket money³, and still Gavin sulked⁴.

Liz hands Gavin a bucket of popcorn and Julie shows them to their seats. Liz sits behind as a member of the cinema audience.

JULIE: Enjoy the film!

They sit, watching the "screen", sharing the popcorn.

TREE: How's your Mum?

GAVIN: Don't know. I haven't seen her for a million years.

TREE: It's hard for her too, Gav. Start to worry when she brings someone home who says he wants to be your new Dad. How's the popcorn? Do you like the adverts? You enjoying yourself? Have you done your English homework yet? Are you enjoying the dance classes? Aren't those two dancers cool? Are you looking forward to the performance? Are you still worried about the lads in the class?

Through all these questions Gavin has responded with minimum physical gestures whilst steadily munching on the popcorn⁵.

TREE: So what do you want to talk about, before the film starts?

GAVIN: Boy's talk.

TREE: Here we go.

GAVIN: Liz! Phooaaaaa! She's a bit of all right⁶. Gorgeous body, great legs, and pretty! She's really good-looking. And have you noticed the way she brings the sides of her mouth down when she speaks? Those ruby-red lips! Are you in love with her, Tree? Liz, I mean.

Tree chokes⁷ on his popcorn.

TREE: What? Look - I - what? ... Er...

¹ eine andere Methode, einen anderen Zugang

² aufheitern

³ ich hab mein ganzes wöchentliches Taschengeld verpulvert

⁴ schmollen

⁵ Popcorn knabbern

⁶ die ist nicht ohne

⁷ sich verschlucken

GAVIN: That means: yes. You've gone red and you're tongue-tied¹, that means you are.

TREE: Shut up, Gav.

GAVIN: She's in love with you.

Tree chokes again.

TREE: What? Look - I - what? ... Er...

GAVIN: I can tell by the way she watches you in the dance class. Can't keep her eyes off you.

TREE: And what do you think of Julie?

GAVIN: Very nice, very funny, a bit strange at times, but not my type!

TREE: That's a shame. I've noticed the way she looks at you; sneaky little glances² from the corner of her eyes. I think she's in love with you...

GAVIN: She's got very nice eyes. And hair, beautiful hair. Actually, she's very pretty when you look at her. Lovely body, nice legs. Phooooaa!

TREE: Ask her to go out with you, then!

GAVIN: Me?

TREE: Why not?

LIZ: Ssshhh! The film's about to start!

Warm-up riff and voice. They start their warm-up exercises. Halfway through Julie yells with pain. She clutches her leg³. Sound stops and they all freeze⁴ apart from Liz.

LIZ: Things got worse. After three weeks of rehearsals Julie hurt herself. Quite badly. We hadn't finished choreographing the dance and we didn't know if we would be able to carry on ...

They re-animate⁵ and Julie crashes to the floor...

LIZ: What is it?

JULIE: My leg.

TREE: It'll be a cramp.

JULIE: It hurts. It's on fire.

LIZ: Where does it hurt? Tree, help her up. Gavin, fetch a chair.

JULIE: It hurts here.

They sit her down. Gavin mops her brow⁶, pats her hand and grins at her.

LIZ: What type of pain?

JULIE: Sharp. Feels like a knife is sticking in it.

¹ schüchtern

² verstohlene kurze Blicke

³ sich das Bein halten

⁴ bewegungslos verharren

⁵ weitermachen, sich wieder bewegen

⁶ die Stirn abwischen

LIZ: It's a pulled muscle. You've pulled the gastrocnemius muscle¹.
 TREE: How do you know?
 LIZ: We're studying it in Biology.
 GAVIN: Are we?
 LIZ: Yes. It's this muscle, the calf muscle. Muscles are attached to the bone by tendons². Julie has stretched one of the tendons³.
 TREE: I must have missed that Biology class.
 JULIE: Excuse me.
 LIZ: I find all that stuff fascinating. And dancing, all this training, has helped me to understand it. It's all fallen into place⁴, it's all so obvious.
 JULIE: Excuse me ...
 LIZ: You see muscles work in pairs by contracting and expanding. Take, for example the biceps and the triceps. As the biceps contract, allowing your lower arm to raise ...
 JULIE: Excuse me! I'm in pain and you're giving a biology lesson?
 LIZ: Sorry.
 TREE: What's the remedy⁵?
 LIZ: Keep it warm. Lots of rest, until it's better.
 JULIE: How long will that be?
 LIZ: A week. Perhaps two.
 JULIE: I'm out of the dance.
 TREE: We're all out of the dance. It's a dance for four people.
Gavin has become one of the Dancers.
 GAVIN *as Dancer*: What's happened?
 JULIE: Pain. Here. Sharp.
 GAVIN *as Dancer*: You've pulled your gastrocnemius muscle.
 LIZ: See!
 GAVIN *as Dancer*: Happens all the time. You'll have to sit out⁶ and watch, for a while.
 TREE: But we haven't finished choreographing the dance. How can Julie keep up if she misses out on a week.
 GAVIN *as Dancer*: I'll teach you how to write the steps down, Julie. At least you'll be able to learn the dance on paper. Have a rest, everyone.
Gavin helps the limping Julie away. Liz takes a chair and takes it downstage.
 LIZ: For the first time in six months I was happy. I looked forward to each day. I got all my work done in time. My grades were getting better. Life was easy.

¹ Wadenmuskel

² Sehnen

³ die Sehne gezerrt, überdehnt

⁴ plötzlich ist mir alles sonnenklar

⁵ was hilft dagegen

⁶ abwarten (sitzenbleiben) und zuschauen

The harder I worked the easier it all seemed. I think it was because I had made friends. We all had something in common. At first I thought it was the dance project, then I understood. Julie is all right, once you get to know her. Because she's quiet, people think she's stupid. She's far from stupid. Gavin is funny, he makes me laugh. But I feel sorry for him, he needs looking after. And Tree, he's a hard case, a tough guy. Thinks he's Daniel Craig. The thing was - we were all lost, and Miss Gordon saw that. She used the dancing to bring us together.

She looks at Tree who is practising at the back.

I'll be honest with you, I like Tree. I mean, I really like him. But I don't think he's interested. It would be the most marvellous thing in the world if he came over here now and said...

TREE: Liz, you look gorgeous. What are you doing on Saturday night?

LIZ: If life was that simple...

TREE: Whenever I see you, my heart races, my pulse quickens¹ ...

LIZ: And I realise...

TREE: That you are the one for me. Let me take you in my arms ...

Tree has picked up the chair, put it in Liz's arms and has gone whilst she is still in her day dream. She kisses the chair, realises what she is doing and is embarrassed in front of the audience. She shrugs.

LIZ: Oh, well...

She takes the chair up to the back as Tree comes downstage...

TREE: This is the story of my life; something good looks like it's about to happen, then it all goes wrong. End of story. I have a distant memory² of my father, of my real father; we were happy, but he left. Five years ago my mother said: how would you like a new father? And there's this man laden down³ with presents, all for me. He plays football with me, makes me laugh. When they get married I understand that this man loathes me⁴ because I stand between him and his wife, just as he stands between me and my mother. Now I discover dancing. It's something I know I can do. It's way out, a place I can get lost in. People think I'm strange because I'm a boy who wants to dance – I can handle that. It's worth the hassle⁵. And now it's all going wrong as usual. The school is against it. Julie is injured. Gavin can't dance. Liz can dance, but she's not really interested. She's not interested in me. I'll be honest, I like Liz. I mean, I really like her. But she wouldn't go out with the likes of me. Imagine ... Liz, would you go out with me - be my girlfriend?

LIZ: *(Screams with laughter)*

¹ meine Pulsfrequenz erhöht sich, mein Puls rast

² eine schwache Erinnerung

³ beladen mit

⁴ ablehnen, hassen, eine Abneigung haben

⁵ es ist das ganze Theater (die ganze Mühe) wert

TREE: Liz, I hate the world I'm living in and I'm looking for a means of escape.

Will you escape with me?

LIZ: Not with the likes of you.

GAVIN *as Jack*: What's going on up there? Who are you talking to?

TREE: Nothing, Jack. Nobody, Jack. Mind your own business, Jack.

Tree marches upstage as Julie limps down...

JULIE: My leg still felt like a metal spike had been pushed up the back of it. A fiery, burning feeling¹. Then it became a dull ache, with shooting, stabbing sensations² when I walk. But it was cool ... it made me feel that ... I was alive.

Gavin rushes downstage.

GAVIN: Mum! Mum! I'm home! Sorry I'm late. Dance class. Had to practise after school. Julie hurt her leg and has to sit out and it means we have to have extra rehearsals. I can't wait for you to come and see it. See me, up on that stage. I'm doing it for you, Mum. Mum? Mother? Are you in? Is anyone there?

Music. Tree and Liz stand face to face. Julie sits to one side. Gavin becomes one of the Dancers.

GAVIN *as Dancer*: Okay. Let's take that sequence³ from the top. Get ready, here it comes and ... step and step and step twist and hold. And lift. And down and push and push and push and push and round and down. Okay.

Music stops.

GAVIN *as Dancer*: That's good. Well remembered. Try it again.

Music. Tree and Liz repeat the sequence.

GAVIN *as Dancer*: Okay. That's good. That's fine. But there's something missing. You're doing all the steps but you're not dancing together. Not really dancing. What does it mean? Tree, when you're pushing forward, what are you telling Liz? Liz, when you're twisting around Tree what are you saying to him? Think about it. Take a break and think for a moment.

Tree and Liz face each other. The music starts and they dance the sequence again. When it's finished Tree and Liz are nose to nose, breathing hard. It's a charged moment.

GAVIN *as Dancer*: That's the one! Julie, have you got all those steps down?

Gavin takes Julie's note pad. There's a pencil drawing of Liz and Tree in an embrace.

GAVIN *as Dancer*: This is not an Art class, Julie. You're supposed to be noting the steps – not drawing the two of them in each other's arms.

TREE: To cheer Julie up, Gavin took her to the cinema.

Gavin and Julie are in the cinema, Liz and Tree become the staff.

GAVIN: Do you want to see "Dawn of the Planet of the Apes"?

¹ heißes, brennendes Gefühl

² ein dumpfer Schmerz, manchmal zuckend und stechend

³ Schrittfolge

JULIE: I can't stand monkeys.

GAVIN: "Hercules" ?

JULIE: (*Shrugs.*)

GAVIN: Popcorn?

JULIE: I'm on a diet.

GAVIN: Sugar-free coke?

JULIE: It makes me burp¹.

GAVIN: Two to see "Hercules".

Liz gives them the tickets and Tree shows them to their seats.

TREE: Enjoy the film.

GAVIN: So – are enjoying the dance classes?

JULIE: I'm injured remember. Not really dancing. Gavin, why did you ask me here?

GAVIN: Well ... since you ask ... I wanted to tell you how good-looking I think you are ...

JULIE: Couldn't you have told me at school?

GAVIN: No. Yes. No! The thing is, I was wondering, if it's all right with you, and you're not too busy, whether you'd consider², and obviously you might want to give it some thought³ because I know I'm not much to look at; strange nose, sticky-up hair, zits⁴, and I don't have much money, either ...

JULIE: What are you trying to say, Gavin?

GAVIN: Will you be my girlfriend?

JULIE: Get lost!

LIZ: Ssshhhh! The film's about to start ...

TREE: It was the day before our performance. Life was perfect, life was sweet. We had created the dance, we had rehearsed it, we were ready ...

Tree shows us some of the steps ...

LIZ: Lunchtime the next day, in front of the whole school. We'd become a team, a crew, we'd become friends, that was the best part for me. And also ... there was Tree and me.

JULIE: My leg was better. I was dancing again.

TREE: Even Gavin was dancing like he had wings on his feet. Eh, Gavin?

GAVIN: Yeah.

LIZ: Your mother will be so proud.

GAVIN: Yeah.

TREE: What's the matter, Gavin?

GAVIN: She can't come and watch. She's very busy, can't get the time off work.

TREE: Never mind, Gavin. We're here. We'll be here.

¹ aufstoßen, rülpsen

² in Betracht ziehen

³ natürlich wirst du darüber nachdenken wollen

⁴ unförmige Nase, stark gegelte Haare, Pickel

GAVIN: I know. Thanks.

TREE: Nothing could stop us now.

LIZ: What could go wrong?

JULIE: And then Miss Gordon told us: (*as Miss Gordon:*) We have to cancel the performance. It's the Deputy Head ... He came to me the other day...

Tree becomes the Deputy Head ...

TREE *as Deputy Head*: Ah, Miss Gordon. A word, if I may. When does your little dance troupe startle us with their skill and dedication¹?

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: Thursday lunchtime, Deputy Head. In the Main Hall.

TREE *as Deputy Head*: I thought so. I'm afraid we have a problem. Electricians will be working in the hall from tomorrow; inspecting the lighting, making repairs, that sort of thing. The hall will be out of use for some time.

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: Can't the work start on Friday?

TREE *as Deputy Head*: I'm afraid not.

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: But my students have been working hard, preparing for this.

TREE *as Deputy Head*: A pity.

Tree squeaks off.

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: The Head will hear of this!

TREE *as Deputy Head*: The Head already has ...

Tree begins to laugh and turns into the exaggerated image of the Deputy Head before squeaking off...

JULIE *as Miss Gordon*: Don't worry. The show will go ahead, somehow.

Perhaps you could perform here, in the Gym. I've got to go and talk to the Head. I'll see you tomorrow ...

TREE: All that work for nothing?

LIZ: I can't believe this is happening.

GAVIN: I'm going home.

JULIE: Me, too.

LIZ: I've got to go, too. Bye.

TREE: This is the story of my life. Hopes raised – then dashed² ...

GAVIN *as Jack*: What's this? This invitation?

TREE: When I got home from school, Jack started to shout ...

GAVIN *as Jack*: What's this invitation about?

TREE: I hadn't mentioned the dance classes to my mother or Jack ...

GAVIN *as Jack*: It's inviting me and your mother to watch a ... (*reading the invitation*) ... student display of dance ...

TREE: The show was off, as far as I could see, but I wasn't telling Jack that.

GAVIN *as Jack*: What does it mean – display of dance?

¹ überraschen, erschrecken – mit ihrer Kunst und ihrem Engagement

² da ich mache mir Hoffnungen, und sie werden gleich wieder zerschlagen

TREE: You know ... dance. Waving your arms and legs about in time to the music.

GAVIN *as Jack*: Why should we want to waste our time watching a group of spotty kids¹ dance?

TREE: Because I'm one of those spotty kids.

GAVIN *as Jack*: What? You? In a ... display of dance? You're having me on².

TREE: Do you have a problem with that, Jack?

GAVIN *as Jack*: I bloody do! What do you want to do something like that for?

TREE: I like it.

GAVIN *as Jack*: You go to school to learn to read and write, not to dance...

TREE: I've learned to read and write. Now I'm learning to dance. All right?

GAVIN *as Jack*: No! It's not all right! What'll people think; a grown lad³, like you, prancing about the stage – displaying himself? They'll think you're soft in the head, they'll think you're queer⁴.

TREE: I don't care what they think.

GAVIN *as Jack*: I do. And you're not bloody doing it. Understand?

TREE: Try and stop me!

Gavin grabs Tree and holds him close.

GAVIN *as Jack*: You will not disgrace⁵ your mother and me by making a spectacle of yourself. No son of mine is.

TREE: I'm not your son!

GAVIN *as Jack*: You cheeky young...

Gavin throws Tree to the floor and marches off. Liz comes down to Tree.

LIZ: Tree? Are you all right?

TREE: I've been thinking ... that we shouldn't dance today. It's been good, these past few weeks, and we've all got a lot out of it. But so much is against us. If we carry on we'll set ourselves apart from the rest of the school. Everyone will resent us⁶ for not being the same as they are. Teachers like the Deputy Head will despise us for daring to step out of line⁷. It's easier not to try. It's easier to give up.

LIZ: What's going on, Tree? I thought you wanted to carve your name on the wall - show everybody...

TREE: Nobody's interested, Liz. Nobody expects us to amount to anything.

GAVIN: Tree's right. They'd just laugh at us.

LIZ: What do you think, Julie?

JULIE: (*Shrugs.*)

¹ pickelige Jugendliche

² das ist doch wohl nicht dein Ernst

³ ein erwachsener Bursch

⁴ schwul

⁵ blamieren (Schande über die Familie bringen)

⁶ alle werden uns ablehnen (die Ablehnung spüren lassen)

⁷ ... sie werden uns übelnehmen, dass wir gewagt haben, anders zu sein

LIZ: Who's going to tell the Dancers and Miss Gordon?

TREE: I will.

GAVIN: What will they say?

TREE: Miss Gordon will be angry. She'll say that we've let her down, wasted her time.

LIZ: And the Dancers?

TREE: They'll give us a team talk; chin up, chest out, best foot forward. We're going to go out there and smash it¹. But it's all right for them, they don't have to live with the consequences.

Gavin and Julie have become the Dancer ...

GAVIN/JULIE *as Dancers*: Hi!

GAVIN *as Dancer*: Good news!

JULIE *as Dancer*: The show will go on. We can perform here, in the Gym.

GAVIN *as Dancer*: Even better news. We're going to perform tonight, after school has finished. Gavin, your mother will be able to come after all. All your parents will be able to come.

TREE: We're not going to dance. We've decided.

JULIE *as Dancer*: You're not?

TREE: No. Sorry.

GAVIN *as Dancer*: That's okay.

TREE: It's because ...

JULIE *as Dancer*: No need to explain.

Julie goes to the sound system and turns on some music. The two Dancers dance together. During which, as one busts a move², the other speaks ...

GAVIN *as Dancer*: We dance because we want to.

JULIE *as Dancer*: Because we have to.

GAVIN *as Dancer*: It's what we do best.

JULIE *as Dancer*: This is the way we speak, talk, express ourselves.

GAVIN *as Dancer*: We're not very good with words.

JULIE *as Dancer*: We don't dance just for other people.

GAVIN *as Dancer*: We dance for ourselves.

JULIE *as Dancer*: Because we want to.

GAVIN *as Dancer*: Because we have to.

GAVIN *as Dancer*: Now that we've learned how to speak, found our voice ...

JULIE *as Dancer*: No one can keep us quiet.

GAVIN *as Dancer*: Even if they wanted to.

The dance finishes. They turn the music off.

JULIE *as Dancer*: So if you don't want to perform that's fine with us.

GAVIN *as Dancer*: It's been good working with you. Later³...

¹ wir werden es ihnen zeigen, wir werden aufdrehen

² eine Bewegung (Tanzschritt) vollführen/ausführen

³ (sl) Bis später, CU

The Dancers go.

TREE: Suddenly we felt empty.

LIZ: Like we'd lost something.

TREE: And we thought about what the Dancers had said. And we realised...

JULIE: We had found a voice.

GAVIN: A way of speaking.

LIZ: And who was going to silence us?

TREE: The Deputy Head? The rest of the class? My stepfather, Jack?

GAVIN: No.

LIZ: No way.

TREE: Never.

JULIE: (*Shakes her head*)

TREE: We won't let them.

LIZ: We'll dance for ourselves...

GAVIN: Because we want to...

JULIE: Because we have to...

Music.

TREE: When the whole school had gathered - teachers and students and parents assembled in the Gym. We came out... and – we danced...

They perform the dance. It's exciting, energetic and expertly executed¹. When it's finished they come down to the front of the acting area – they put on jackets, coats and hats ...

TREE: And ... we smashed it! It was like we were flying. And dancing in front of an audience made me feel that I had found a home. Whether they had come to mock us or cheer us on², I didn't care. I had something to tell them and, for a moment, they listened.

JULIE: All that was a while ago now. Time's passed...

TREE: I'm still dancing. I went to the School of Contemporary Dance in London. Miss Gordon helped me apply for scholarships and grants³. And for two years now, I've been dancing with professional companies – I'm thinking about starting my own company.

LIZ: Through dancing I discovered the human body. I decided to study medicine and I graduated from Manchester University last summer. I work as a junior⁴ in a hospital.

TREE: Dr. Liz.

LIZ: Tree and I aren't together anymore. Not for a long time. We both got too involved⁵ in what we wanted to study and didn't have the time for each other ...

¹ schwungvoll und meisterhaft ausgeführt

² um sich über uns lustig zu machen oder uns anzufeuern

³ um Stipendien ansuchen

⁴ Turnusärztin

⁵ wir sind beide ganz in unseren Studien aufgegangen

GAVIN: I work in a bank. I like it. I really do. It's steady¹. I don't dance anymore – couldn't dance anyway; two left feet – and if I did, what would the customers say? I'm glad I did dance, though. It was a laugh. My Mum came and told me she was proud of me...

JULIE: I learnt that you don't have to speak to be able to express yourself and I spent the rest of my school days in the Art room. I am now an Art teacher.

GAVIN: We're all still friends. We often meet up to go and watch Tree. And guess what – Julie and I have been going out together for two years, three months and five days...

JULIE: (*Shrugs*)

GAVIN: We might even get married.

JULIE: Get lost!

LIZ: And did we carve our names on the wall, Tree? Back then?

TREE: On the wall of the school-hall of our memories, we did.

Tree picks up a chair and begins to beat a gentle rhythm

TREE: But what made us dance? Was it Miss Gordon? Or the two dancers? Or even the Deputy Head?

JULIE: It was – having something to say.

The others pick up their chairs and join in, adding to the rhythm.

GAVIN: It was more than that...

LIZ: It was having something to say and knowing...

TREE/LIZ/GAVIN/JULIE: No one could keep us quiet.

The rhythm stops...

TREE: We wouldn't let them.

The End

¹ sicher, regelmäßig, verlässlich

Quick Comprehension Check

- What are the names of the four main characters in the play?
- As the scene opens, where are they, and why?
- Find three adjectives each which, for you, best describe the characters:

T

G

L

J

- Who is Miss Gordon? What, in her opinion, is the main problem of the teens?
- How is she planning to help them improve at school?
- How do the teens feel about this at first?
- Who does most of the talking so far? Why is that, do you think?
- Do their feelings/attitudes change after their first classes? If yes, how?

Make some notes, then talk to a partner or discuss in class:

T

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G

.....

L

.....

J

.....

- Tree and Liz eventually start talking to each other. What do they find out?
- What is the Deputy Head's attitude towards Miss Gordon's dance team?
- What do the characters' classmates think of the dance classes?
- Is the way Tree and Gavin are dealing with the situation at school similar or different? How?
- Talking to Gavin in the cinema, what does Tree find out about himself?
- What happens to Julie during the rehearsals?
- Are Tree and Liz actually getting together? When? How?
- Gavin is taking Julie to the cinema. Why?
- What happens the day before the performance?
- Tree loves dancing. How does his stepfather react?
- How do the characters feel about performing now?

- What happens when they tell the dancers that they don't want to perform?
- Does the performance take place in the end?
- What are the characters doing now?

T

G

L

J

- Are they still friends? How do they explain this?

- What do you think of the play? Did you like it? Why/why not?
- Looking at the title of the play, was it what you expected? Why/why not?
- Was the language of the play easy to understand?
- Do you think the characters were interesting? Why/why not?
- Which of the characters did you like best? Explain why?
- Were there any characters you didn't like at all? Why?
- Is there a character you would have liked to learn more about? If yes, who?
- Were there any part(s) of the play that made you feel particularly

happy angry pleased sad interested surprised

- If you could change places with one of the characters, who would you like to change into? Say why. Anyone you would not like to be? Why?
- How do all characters relate to each other?

Try drawing a diagram: the four teenagers in the centre, all other characters around them. Then draw lines, showing how the characters interrelate with each other. If the relationship is a positive (loving/caring/respectful) one, colour the line green; if it's negative, make it red.

VIENNA'S *English* THEATRE

- 1966 MAN OF DESTINY by George Bernard Shaw
1967 THE HAPPY JOURNEY by Thornton Wilder
1968 VILLAGE WOOING by George Bernard Shaw
1970 THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST by Oscar Wilde
1971 THE GLASS MENAGERIE by Tennessee Williams
1972 MAN OF DESTINY by George Bernard Shaw
1973 LOVERS by Brian Friel
1973 AN INSPECTOR CALLS by J. B. Priestley
1974 THE HAPPY JOURNEY by Thornton Wilder
1975 OF LOVERS AND FOOLS, scenes from Shakespeare as arranged by Manfred Vogel
1976 A SLIGHT ACCIDENT by James Saunders
LOOK BACK IN ANGER by John Osborne
1977 THE HAPPY JOURNEY by Thornton Wilder
ARMS AND THE MAN by George Bernard Shaw
1978 FAMILY ALBUM by David Newby
AN INSPECTOR CALLS by J. B. Priestley
1979 THE CANTERVILLE GHOST by Nicholas Allen, based on the story by Oscar Wilde
ALL MY SONS by Arthur Miller
1980 THE HAPPY JOURNEY by Thornton Wilder
MAN OF DESTINY by George Bernard Shaw
1981 FAMILY ALBUM by David Newby
RELATIVELY SPEAKING by Alan Ayckbourn
1982 THE CANTERVILLE GHOST by Nicholas Allen, based on the story by Oscar Wilde
A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS by Robert Bolt
1983 ROBIN HOOD by Nicholas Allen. An entertainment with music
LOVERS by Brian Friel
1984 THE HAPPY JOURNEY by Thornton Wilder
1984/85 KING ARTHUR by Nicholas Allen. An entertainment with music
THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST by Oscar Wilde
1985/86 THE CANTERVILLE GHOST by Nicholas Allen, based on the story by Oscar Wilde
THE GLASS MENAGERIE by Tennessee Williams
1986/87 SONGS AND DREAMS by Nicholas Allen
SAME TIME, NEXT YEAR by Bernard Slade
1987/88 DICK WHITTINGTON AND HIS CAT by Sean Aita
LOOK BACK IN ANGER by John Osborne
1988/89 THE WIDOW'S DIAMONDS by Nicholas Allen
THE PRIVATE EAR by Peter Schaffer
1989/90 ROBIN HOOD by Nicholas Allen. An entertainment with music
IN PRAISE OF LOVE by Terence Rattigan
1990/91 THE HAPPY JOURNEY by Thornton Wilder
DANGEROUS OBSESSION by N. F. Crisp
1991/92 RICHARD THE LIONHEART by Nicholas Allen
THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH by Sean Aita
THE ZOO STORY by Edward Albee
1992/93 SONGS AND DREAMS by Nicholas Allen
STAGE BY STAGE by Jennie Graham
I OUGHT TO BE IN PICTURES by Neil Simon
1993/94 TREASURE ISLAND by Sean Aita
SHERLOCK HOLMES INVESTIGATES by Ingrid Statman
RELATIVELY SPEAKING by Alan Ayckbourn
1994/95 FAMILY ALBUM by David Newby
FREDDY AND THE CLOVEN HOOF by Adam Bridges
LOVERS by Brian Friel

1995/96 THE CANTERVILLE GHOST by Nicholas Allen
 DRACULA by Sean Aita
 MY CHILDREN! MY AFRICA! by Athol Fugard
 1996/97 CRUSOE by Nicholas Allen, based on the novel by Daniel Defoe
 LOVE HURTS by Sean Aita
 THE GLASS MENAGERIE by Tennessee Williams
 1997/98 HUCKLEBERRY FINN by Sean Aita
 SUGAR AND SPICE by Philip Dart
 ALL MY SONS by Arthur Miller
 1998/99 THE SWORD AND THE CROWN by Sean Aita
 BOTTLING OUT by Philip Dart
 BUTTERFLIES ARE FREE by Leonard Gershe
 1999/00 BANANAS by Sean Aita and Nicholas Allen
 DANCE CLASS by Clive Duncan
 THE BROWNING VERSION by Terence Rattigan
 2000/01 AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS by Sean Aita
 MILLENNIUM by Sean Aita
 BLUE GIRL by Deborah Aita
 2001/02 HOTMAIL FROM HELSINKI by Judy Upton
 ROMY AND JULIAN by Clive Duncan
 THE LAST YANKEE by Arthur Miller
 2002/03 A PERFECT MATCH by Sean Aita
 A DOG'S LIFE by Sean Aita
 DANGEROUS OBSESSION by N.J Crisp
 2003/04 STREETS OF LONDON by Sean Aita
 WILD WEEKEND by Clive Duncan
 BUTTERFLIES ARE FREE by Leonard Gershe
 2004/05 THE CANTERVILLE GHOST adapted from Oscar Wilde by Clive Duncan
 SUGAR AND SPICE by Philip Dart
 MACBETH adapted from Shakespeare by Clive Duncan
 2005/06 AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS by Sean Aita
 ROMY & JULIAN by Clive Duncan
 THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND a Woody Guthrie Folk Musicale devised by David M. Lutken
 2006/07 REVOLTING BRITONS by Clive Duncan
 DANCE CLASS by Clive Duncan
 LOOK BACK IN ANGER by John Osborne
 2007/08 VIRTUAL HEROES by Clive Duncan
 WILD WEEKEND by Clive Duncan
 PITCH BLACK by Clive Duncan
 2008/09 PERFECT MATCH by Sean Aita
 LITTLE GIRL LIES by Claudia Leaf
 VIRGINS by John Retallack
 2009/10 FAME GAME by Philip Dart
 SACRIFICE by Claudia Leaf
 MACBETH by William Shakespeare adapted by Clive Duncan
 2010/11 ROB AND THE HOODIES by Sean Aita
 ROMY & JULIAN by Clive Duncan
 BUTTERFLIES ARE FREE by Leonard Gershe
 2011/12 THE SWITCH by Philip Dart
 DISCONNECTED by Adam Barnard
 PITCH BLACK by Clive Duncan
 2012/13 AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS by Sean Aita
 JEKYLL'S POTION by James Cawood
 A PICTURE by Clive Duncan
 2013/14 VIRTUAL HEROES by Clive Duncan
 POPULAR by Philip Dart
 PRETTY SHREWD by Clive Duncan



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