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00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:32,200

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00:00:32,600 --> 00:00:36,000

Hello everybody and welcome to the Australian Performing Arts Teachers

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00:00:36,000 --> 00:00:37,100

Association.

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00:00:37,100 --> 00:00:38,500

APATA podcast.

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00:00:38,800 --> 00:00:43,600

It has been a wonderful opportunity today to sit down and have an

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00:00:43,600 --> 00:00:49,300

in-depth chat with Amy Tinning from Branches Performing Arts, Amy and

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00:00:49,300 --> 00:00:54,900

her team cover a footprint that is just extraordinary.No matter where

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00:00:54,900 --> 00:00:59,500

you are and how remote or regional you may be, Amy and her team are

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00:00:59,500 --> 00:00:59,900

there.

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00:01:00,000 --> 00:01:05,700

They offer high-quality training, they do in-person training, they

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00:01:05,700 --> 00:01:10,300

have a fortnightly rotating schedule and their footprint is from Hughenden,

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00:01:10,300 --> 00:01:16,200

Richmond and Julia Creek across to Longreach, way out into areas of

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00:01:16,200 --> 00:01:21,900

the Northern Territory, and they are making dance available and viable

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00:01:21,900 --> 00:01:26,700

for everybody across some really remote and regional areas. I had a

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00:01:26,700 --> 00:01:29,800

wonderful time speaking to Amy and

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00:01:29,900 --> 00:01:33,300

certainly learning more about what Branches Performing Arts do, and I

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00:01:33,300 --> 00:01:37,800

hope that you enjoy this podcast as much as I have recording it.

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00:02:23,000 --> 00:02:26,100

Lou: Hello Amy, welcome to the APATA podcast.

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00:02:26,100 --> 00:02:29,400

Thank you so much for joining us today from the Northwest.

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00:02:29,500 --> 00:02:30,400

Amy: No worries.

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00:02:30,400 --> 00:02:36,100

Thanks so much for having me

Lou: Start with how Branches Performing

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00:02:36,100 --> 00:02:38,800

Arts works, and let's get a good understanding of the footprint that

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00:02:38,800 --> 00:02:38,900

you

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00:02:39,100 --> 00:02:42,500

cover. Right up in the Northwest and down to Central from my

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00:02:42,500 --> 00:02:43,400

understanding.

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00:02:43,500 --> 00:02:47,000

So for you today, whereabouts are we chatting to you from?

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00:02:47,700 --> 00:02:52,200

Amy: I am currently at home in Julia Creek, in North West Queensland.

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00:02:53,000 --> 00:02:59,600

And that is based, roughly seven hundred odd km's northwest from

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00:02:59,600 --> 00:02:59,800

Townsville.

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00:03:00,400 --> 00:03:02,300

Lou: How many schools do you cover?

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00:03:02,300 --> 00:03:06,000

So let's talk about this footprint that you cover across the northwest

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00:03:06,000 --> 00:03:07,500

and into the central areas.

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00:03:07,600 --> 00:03:08,300

Amy: Yeah, of course.

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00:03:08,300 --> 00:03:15,900

Sorry we currently have nine studios, so we have little pop-up

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00:03:15,900 --> 00:03:19,600

studios, and HQ in Julia Creek.

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00:03:19,800 --> 00:03:20,400

So our pop up

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00:03:20,400 --> 00:03:24,906

studios are Hughenden, Richmond, Cloncurry, Mt Isa, Winton,

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00:03:24,906 --> 00:03:29,900

Longreach, Barcaldine and then also a distance dance online

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00:03:30,000 --> 00:03:30,900

dance school.

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00:03:31,500 --> 00:03:34,900

And then, like I said, our HQ is here in Julia Creek where I call home.

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00:03:35,600 --> 00:03:39,600

Lou: When you talk about, and I know you do an online platform, as well as

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00:03:39,600 --> 00:03:44,500

go to all these wonderful communities in our outback areas.

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00:03:44,700 --> 00:03:47,700

What sort of kilometres are we looking at here when you're, when

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00:03:47,700 --> 00:03:49,100

you're on the road and you're traveling?

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00:03:49,300 --> 00:03:54,100

Amy: Yeah, look, usually we based our schedule, off a fortnightly schedule,

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00:03:54,100 --> 00:03:57,500

and that involves us traveling about 1,886km

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00:04:00,000 --> 00:04:01,000

collectively.

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00:04:01,000 --> 00:04:05,000

So I have one other teacher who works with me full-time and we share

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00:04:05,000 --> 00:04:08,900

those kilometres out over a fortnight, but yeah, just under 2,000km a

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00:04:08,900 --> 00:04:14,000

fortnight. Lou: And how many students would you see across such distance?

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00:04:14,200 --> 00:04:18,300

Amy: We see roughly just over 300 students in Queensland and the Northern

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00:04:18,300 --> 00:04:21,700

Territory as well, and some in Northern New South Wales.

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00:04:21,899 --> 00:04:25,300

Lou: Well you're Performing Arts, so you cover lots of different things.

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00:04:25,300 --> 00:04:26,200

Amy: Yeah, look

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00:04:26,200 --> 00:04:29,800

so, our dance styles are more commercial dance

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00:04:29,900 --> 00:04:36,200

styles. So yeah, they range from the Gumnut Babies, who are our tiny tots,

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00:04:36,200 --> 00:04:40,500

all the way through to more advanced dancers, who are part of our

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00:04:40,500 --> 00:04:41,900

Advanced Training Program.

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00:04:42,600 --> 00:04:45,600

But yeah, we offer all different styles of dance - ballet;

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00:04:45,600 --> 00:04:50,000

Tap; Jazz; contemporary; Acro; hip hop now as well.

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00:04:50,900 --> 00:04:56,800

And yeah, it's definitely something that is very popular, particularly

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00:04:56,800 --> 00:04:59,800

among the little girls, and some boys

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00:04:59,900 --> 00:05:06,000

within the communities, but also it's the online school is growing in

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00:05:06,000 --> 00:05:09,200

popularity amongst advanced dancers looking to bolster their training

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00:05:09,200 --> 00:05:09,600

as well.

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00:05:09,600 --> 00:05:17,200

Lou: When you say Advanced, do you also have like adult classes for people

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00:05:17,200 --> 00:05:20,500

that you know, might have been out of the game for a little bit but

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00:05:20,500 --> 00:05:24,500

it's exercise and they, you know, might love to be in the barre and



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00:05:24,500 --> 00:05:27,600

that might be in their lounge room or wherever that is to reach out to that?

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00:05:27,600 --> 00:05:28,600

Amy: Yeah, yeah.

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00:05:28,600 --> 00:05:29,900

Certainly we do have

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00:05:29,900 --> 00:05:33,400

quite a few adults who do reach out and want to be a part of like

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00:05:33,400 --> 00:05:38,600

our more fitness-based classes, but when I say Advanced, I'm really

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00:05:38,600 --> 00:05:44,900

more for referring to elite dancers who are in their youth and wanting

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00:05:44,900 --> 00:05:47,600

to extend themselves and get that extra training.

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00:05:47,600 --> 00:05:52,900

For exam preparation and comp preparation. Lou: Let's talk exams, because, of the

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00:05:52,900 --> 00:05:56,500

amount of studios that you have I'm assuming here, and please correct

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00:05:56,500 --> 00:05:59,800

me if I'm wrong, but the exam period

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00:06:00,000 --> 00:06:03,400

that kind of all, you know runs within a certain timeframe as

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00:06:03,400 --> 00:06:08,200

isteddfods and recitals. I'm assuming you've got days that are quite

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00:06:08,200 --> 00:06:10,200

back-to-back here and to support students.

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00:06:10,200 --> 00:06:10,800

Amy: Yeah.

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00:06:10,800 --> 00:06:13,400

Lou: And adjudicators coming out and examiners.

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00:06:13,400 --> 00:06:14,600

What does that look like?

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00:06:14,600 --> 00:06:18,700

Amy: Yeah, look, organised chaos is what it looks like. (Laughter)

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00:06:19,000 --> 00:06:23,306

So we do R.A.D exams for

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00:06:23,306 --> 00:06:27,300

all of our ballet students, they learn the work and then

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00:06:27,300 --> 00:06:29,900

those who are wanting to extend themselves

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00:06:30,000 --> 00:06:33,000

and travel if, they have to, there's a bit of travel involved in them

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00:06:33,000 --> 00:06:33,600

sitting their exams.

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00:06:33,600 --> 00:06:37,100

They have to travel to Townsville to actually sit their exam, but we

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00:06:37,100 --> 00:06:38,700

prepare them in-person and also online.

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00:06:38,700 --> 00:06:41,800

So yeah, that's that.

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00:06:41,800 --> 00:06:43,300

It happens once a year.

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00:06:43,300 --> 00:06:48,000

We also have at the end of the year, six pop-up performances or

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00:06:48,000 --> 00:06:52,400

concerts they happen in Hughenden Richmond, Julia creek, Cloncurry,

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00:06:52,400 --> 00:06:56,400

and Winton, and Longreach, as well.

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00:06:56,400 --> 00:06:59,700

And then the other thing that we have

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00:07:00,100 --> 00:07:05,100

started to do this year, is we set up a youth dance company

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00:07:05,100 --> 00:07:06,500

called Co Stars.

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00:07:07,200 --> 00:07:12,200

And that is also aimed at giving that extra performance opportunity

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00:07:12,200 --> 00:07:15,500

for those kids who want to perform, and not just competitively.

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00:07:16,100 --> 00:07:21,000

So yeah, it's for basically performing at local community events and

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00:07:21,000 --> 00:07:22,200

things like that.

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00:07:22,500 --> 00:07:27,200

We also run our own dance festival here in Julia Creek called Dirty Feet

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00:07:27,200 --> 00:07:28,800

Outback Dance Festival.

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00:07:28,900 --> 00:07:29,800

So, yes, we do,

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00:07:29,900 --> 00:07:32,500

coordinate an adjudicator to come out, we've had the Queensland

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00:07:32,500 --> 00:07:37,300

Ballet run a masterclass at the event for our bursaries and we have

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00:07:37,300 --> 00:07:40,300

competitors who travel from as far afield

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00:07:40,300 --> 00:07:44,500

as Proserpine, Bowen, Mackay, they all come out here, which is an amazing,

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00:07:44,500 --> 00:07:48,100

huge commitment from them and I love to see how open-minded they are

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00:07:48,100 --> 00:07:48,300

too.

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00:07:48,300 --> 00:07:51,600

I think is a great adventure for those coastal competitors, to

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00:07:51,600 --> 00:07:53,400

come out and try something different

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00:07:53,800 --> 00:07:56,500

and, as we say, get their feet a little bit dirty out here so that's

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00:07:56,500 --> 00:07:57,300

great.

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00:07:57,800 --> 00:07:59,800

And I think our E team

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00:08:00,000 --> 00:08:05,700

So, our performance team, we attend roughly 10 comps and two

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00:08:05,700 --> 00:08:09,900

national finals annually and that those comps happen usually

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00:08:09,900 --> 00:08:12,900

throughout Queensland and some also in Northern New South Wales as

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00:08:12,900 --> 00:08:13,300

well.

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00:08:13,900 --> 00:08:19,400

So definitely keeps us very busy in between our classes which we run

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00:08:19,400 --> 00:08:21,900

on roughly a fortnightly schedule.

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00:08:22,600 --> 00:08:27,800

Lou: What would be your biggest challenge working out in remote

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00:08:27,800 --> 00:08:29,800

communities, what's what have you found to be your biggest

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00:08:29,900 --> 00:08:33,500

challenge? It might have been when you first started or, you know,

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00:08:33,500 --> 00:08:34,500

day-to-day business.

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00:08:34,500 --> 00:08:35,500

What would that be?

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00:08:35,900 --> 00:08:40,299

Amy; Well, when I first started, it was certainly kilometres.

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00:08:40,299 --> 00:08:46,000

So, you know, we had our geographical challenges, I think that we have

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00:08:46,000 --> 00:08:52,800

worked really hard on the service that we provide to make it viable.

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00:08:53,400 --> 00:08:56,800

So I guess, you know, obviously there's that element from a business

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00:08:56,800 --> 00:08:59,800

perspective of having to factor in the price of fuel

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00:09:00,000 --> 00:09:02,000

Just which is only ever rising, accommodation.

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00:09:02,100 --> 00:09:06,000

All of those logistical things that are not necessarily thought about,



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00:09:06,000 --> 00:09:11,600

but through our engagement with very, very supportive, local

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00:09:11,600 --> 00:09:16,400

governments and RADF funding initiatives, we have been able to

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00:09:16,400 --> 00:09:21,100

create a program that is absolutely viable and it's affordable for

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00:09:21,100 --> 00:09:21,800

families.

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00:09:21,800 --> 00:09:26,700

And also means that we can provide a service to communities

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00:09:27,000 --> 00:09:29,800

that's also viable for us and our time, obviously,

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00:09:30,000 --> 00:09:31,400

to travel to these places.

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00:09:31,400 --> 00:09:36,000

So certainly would not be possible without that engagement from local

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00:09:36,000 --> 00:09:39,400

government, who definitely see a value in it.

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00:09:40,000 --> 00:09:43,500

And, you know, we work really closely together with them to try and

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00:09:43,500 --> 00:09:44,900

create more livable communities.

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00:09:44,900 --> 00:09:49,500

Essentially, because I guess it's something that's definitely become a

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00:09:49,500 --> 00:09:52,800

lot more valued by local government in recent times.

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00:09:52,800 --> 00:09:56,500

Because, you know, they see that they want to attract families, you

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00:09:56,500 --> 00:09:59,700

know, that they want to attract things like Health, Healthcare.

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00:10:00,000 --> 00:10:00,400

professionals,

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00:10:00,400 --> 00:10:01,300

Doctors.

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00:10:01,600 --> 00:10:02,800

Nurses, Vets.

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00:10:02,800 --> 00:10:04,100

People like that.

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00:10:04,700 --> 00:10:07,900

You know, they are often family people who want to create a life for

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00:10:07,900 --> 00:10:09,100

themselves and their families.

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00:10:09,100 --> 00:10:11,500

And dance is a huge part of that.

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00:10:11,500 --> 00:10:19,100

So yeah, certainly just working in with that ecosystem in a community,

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00:10:19,900 --> 00:10:21,100

is what it's all about.

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00:10:21,100 --> 00:10:26,200

And I think, you know, in the start, the challenges were also around

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00:10:26,200 --> 00:10:29,700

the logistics of the way that we ran, I suppose.

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00:10:30,300 --> 00:10:36,100

I've, I was always trained in quite structured, strict environments and

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00:10:36,300 --> 00:10:37,700

you know, from that training

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00:10:37,700 --> 00:10:41,300

I definitely received a huge amount of knowledge which I'm now very

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00:10:41,300 --> 00:10:47,200

grateful to pass on to my students. But I think certainly I had to, as a

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00:10:47,200 --> 00:10:51,500

teacher, adapt my expectations and the way that I would teach.

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00:10:51,500 --> 00:10:55,500

And you know what, I sort of wanted to achieve and how I was going to

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00:10:55,500 --> 00:10:59,800

go about that in a different environment than what I have been

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00:11:00,000 --> 00:11:00,500

taught it in.

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00:11:00,500 --> 00:11:05,400

So you know, I was definitely very classically trained and went on to

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00:11:05,400 --> 00:11:08,500

be a contemporary dancer, a professional contemporary dancer for a

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00:11:08,500 --> 00:11:09,300

short time.

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00:11:09,300 --> 00:11:13,400

And yeah, the environment's. The environment's really different, but

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00:11:14,300 --> 00:11:18,300

certainly adaptable and the skills, and the knowledge I have, has

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00:11:18,300 --> 00:11:22,000

been very adaptable to passing on in this instance, as well.

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00:11:22,000 --> 00:11:27,400

So, yeah, I think it was in the environment was a challenge and the

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00:11:27,400 --> 00:11:29,800

general culture and yeah.

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00:11:29,900 --> 00:11:33,600

Yeah, just even, you know, like it involved when we first started

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00:11:33,600 --> 00:11:41,700

involved, really training a whole community to know what is expected

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00:11:41,700 --> 00:11:45,600

at a dance class and how it all runs.

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00:11:45,600 --> 00:11:50,500

So yeah, that was probably the biggest challenge when we very first

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00:11:50,500 --> 00:11:51,300

started was that.

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00:11:51,300 --> 00:11:56,500

And now, the challenges aren't so much in the way that we run, and

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00:11:56,500 --> 00:11:59,500

it's probably more challenging in the

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00:12:00,100 --> 00:12:02,400

Internet connection and connectivity.

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00:12:02,400 --> 00:12:07,700

In general, is what, we very much demand a high level of

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00:12:07,700 --> 00:12:13,700

connectivity in what we do and just trying to you know find greater

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00:12:13,800 --> 00:12:16,900

greater and better internet connections for, not too much for me

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00:12:16,900 --> 00:12:18,300

mine is quite good,

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00:12:18,300 --> 00:12:21,700

but for obviously our students.

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00:12:23,000 --> 00:12:24,500

Lou: So how long have you been running?

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00:12:24,500 --> 00:12:28,700

Branches Performing Arts? Amy: Seven and a half years.

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00:12:28,900 --> 00:12:29,400

Lou: Wow.

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00:12:29,400 --> 00:12:29,900

Wow.

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00:12:29,900 --> 00:12:30,600

That's amazing.

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00:12:30,600 --> 00:12:34,100

Congratulations to all of you because it makes just such a difference

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00:12:34,100 --> 00:12:36,100

as you said to communities.

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00:12:36,100 --> 00:12:40,700

And you know, you probably think back only 20 years ago that you know

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00:12:40,700 --> 00:12:43,900

if you were moving to more remote areas, you were limited across the

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00:12:43,900 --> 00:12:49,000

number of performing arts areas and to see that just all change just

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00:12:49,200 --> 00:12:52,000

and allow people to explore their creativity, especially in

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00:12:52,000 --> 00:12:52,600

performance,

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00:12:52,800 --> 00:12:55,600

Which we're all about, it's just wonderful.



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00:12:55,600 --> 00:13:00,000

And what would be your biggest achievement since you've started your

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00:13:00,000 --> 00:13:01,100

seven and a half years in?

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00:13:01,100 --> 00:13:02,000

There's probably Lots.

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00:13:02,000 --> 00:13:04,800

you know, you talked about the logistics and accommodation but I

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00:13:04,800 --> 00:13:09,000

also think you know it's not like you can just run down to the local

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00:13:09,000 --> 00:13:10,400

dance store and pick up your tights.

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00:13:10,400 --> 00:13:11,000

Right? (Laughter)

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00:13:12,900 --> 00:13:16,500

There's an organisation level here that needs to be factored in as

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00:13:16,500 --> 00:13:21,600

well and especially for new parents that are coming into studios,

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00:13:21,600 --> 00:13:22,600

there's a lot for them to

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00:13:22,700 --> 00:13:26,500

onboard and learn and that education, how it operates.

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00:13:26,700 --> 00:13:28,200

So what's your biggest achievement?

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00:13:28,200 --> 00:13:30,200

Do you think? Amy: Oh

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00:13:30,200 --> 00:13:35,100

I really can't probably narrow it down to one particular thing.

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00:13:35,100 --> 00:13:39,300

I think it's definitely the biggest achievement is just the general

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00:13:39,300 --> 00:13:42,800

scope of what we've been able to create over that seven and a half

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00:13:42,800 --> 00:13:49,400

years and I really couldn't put my finger on one pivotal thing.

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00:13:49,800 --> 00:13:52,600

Distance Dance probably is quite

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00:13:52,800 --> 00:13:57,700

up there with achievements and more

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00:13:57,700 --> 00:14:03,300

so, I'm just really proud of the collective effort that that took to

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00:14:03,300 --> 00:14:07,600

make that happen, because it would never have happened

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00:14:08,000 --> 00:14:12,000

had people not being open to receiving it.

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00:14:12,000 --> 00:14:13,300

Yeah that's the biggest.

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00:14:13,300 --> 00:14:19,600

That's definitely the biggest thing is, you know, obviously Covid and

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00:14:19,600 --> 00:14:22,200

the restrictions, and the lockdowns that occurred.

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00:14:22,700 --> 00:14:24,700

Were challenging even.

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00:14:24,700 --> 00:14:28,500

Even for us, they were challenging, but through some creative thinking

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00:14:28,500 --> 00:14:31,400

and some really open-minded people, that we were lucky enough to work

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00:14:31,400 --> 00:14:36,100

with, and find along the journey, it's certainly strengthened what we

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00:14:36,100 --> 00:14:37,900

do and the service that we can offer.

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00:14:38,500 --> 00:14:40,000

Lou: What does you said before that?

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00:14:40,000 --> 00:14:41,800

You work on a fortnightly schedule.

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00:14:41,800 --> 00:14:45,800

What does an ordinary fortnight look for you as a teacher with your

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00:14:45,800 --> 00:14:46,500

studio?

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00:14:46,900 --> 00:14:47,200

Amy: Yeah.

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00:14:47,300 --> 00:14:52,600

So as we sort of talked about before it, it looks like roughly

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00:14:52,700 --> 00:14:59,200

just under 2,000km behind the wheel of a car, several fuel stops

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00:14:59,400 --> 00:14:59,800

few bags of

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00:15:00,100 --> 00:15:06,200

lollies and a bucket of chips. (Laughter) Seven towns in a fortnight.

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00:15:06,500 --> 00:15:10,400

Like I said, we do that collectively with the other teacher, Tammy

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00:15:10,400 --> 00:15:12,500

Gordon, who works alongside me.

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00:15:13,500 --> 00:15:19,200

And yeah, we teach together, we teach about 84, sheduled classes

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00:15:19,200 --> 00:15:25,600

across all the different styles of dances and we also have quite, quite

248

00:15:25,600 --> 00:15:29,300

a huge range of children that we privately coach.

249

00:15:29,300 --> 00:15:29,700

So we

250

00:15:30,000 --> 00:15:34,300

We do have about 80 private coaching sessions in a fortnight, patients

251

00:15:34,300 --> 00:15:36,100

that are further away from us,

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00:15:37,100 --> 00:15:41,600

They will be seen roughly once a semester or even sometimes once a

253

00:15:41,600 --> 00:15:46,200

year because the locations are thousands of kilometres away from us.

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00:15:46,200 --> 00:15:51,200

So we're trying to work out and coordinate, a little bit of a tour so

255

00:15:51,200 --> 00:15:55,400

that we can connect in person with all of our online students as well.

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00:15:56,300 --> 00:15:57,100

Lou: Oh that's amazing.

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00:15:57,100 --> 00:15:59,500

Lou: And with your online program

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00:16:00,000 --> 00:16:04,000

I'll be right in saying that it wasn't just covid that activated this

259

00:16:04,000 --> 00:16:07,500

it's really about looking at your geographical footprint in that reach

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00:16:07,500 --> 00:16:11,900

to make sure, you know that your, the students are, you know,

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00:16:11,900 --> 00:16:14,800

feeling really part of the process and the community.

262

00:16:15,000 --> 00:16:18,900

Amy: Yeah, it was look Distance Dance.

263

00:16:18,900 --> 00:16:26,400

That's offered online was definitely definitely propelled by the

264

00:16:26,400 --> 00:16:29,700

openness and willingness to use a program like

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00:16:29,900 --> 00:16:34,800

Zoom, however, it's always been driven by absolute demand.

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00:16:35,500 --> 00:16:40,400

You know, I think there's a lot of people in small communities with

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00:16:40,400 --> 00:16:46,300

small children who really want to give them that opportunity to live

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00:16:46,300 --> 00:16:47,400

out their dreams.

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00:16:47,900 --> 00:16:52,700

And, you know, I'm really proud to say that certainly we offer an

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00:16:52,700 --> 00:16:56,800

amazing like recreational program is what we call it as well as an

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00:16:56,800 --> 00:16:57,800

advanced program.

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00:16:57,800 --> 00:16:59,500

So you know, it's incredible



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00:17:00,100 --> 00:17:05,599

that we could have some students who simply dance for fun and the

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00:17:05,599 --> 00:17:09,000

love of it and, you know, that the fitness element of it as well,

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00:17:09,000 --> 00:17:14,000

coordination, motor skills, all of those things as well as, you know,

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00:17:14,300 --> 00:17:18,000

little girls with dreams that, you know, that want to go on and do

277

00:17:18,000 --> 00:17:19,200

something with dance

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00:17:19,200 --> 00:17:20,900

whether that's teaching or performing.

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00:17:21,700 --> 00:17:27,500

We have had students who have been accepted into the Australian

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00:17:27,500 --> 00:17:29,800

Ballet Interstate Training Program,

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00:17:29,900 --> 00:17:32,600

and gone off to do amazing things.

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00:17:32,600 --> 00:17:38,500

So, certainly with Zoom, that has meant that we've been able to train

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00:17:38,500 --> 00:17:40,300

them the way that they need to be trained.

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00:17:40,600 --> 00:17:43,700

And the frequency of training is there as well through.

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00:17:43,800 --> 00:17:47,900

They are able to receive training, you know, several times a week as

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00:17:47,900 --> 00:17:49,700

opposed to once a week, you know.

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00:17:49,700 --> 00:17:52,900

And that's that's training that they require to reach a certain level,

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00:17:52,900 --> 00:17:56,900

and a benchmark, that's required to achieve what they would like to

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00:17:56,900 --> 00:17:57,500

achieve.

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00:17:58,200 --> 00:17:58,900

Lou: Wow, yeah.

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00:17:58,900 --> 00:17:59,800

Just, it's amazing.

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00:18:00,000 --> 00:18:01,600

Just opens up for everybody.

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00:18:01,600 --> 00:18:06,700

So yeah, fantastic program I've jumped on and had a look and and I'd

294

00:18:06,700 --> 00:18:10,900

suggest that those that want to be a part of that to do the same.

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00:18:10,900 --> 00:18:12,100

So really great of you and your team.

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00:18:12,100 --> 00:18:16,400

I actually thought there would have been more of you to be

297

00:18:16,400 --> 00:18:18,900

honest, just on your geographical footprint.

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00:18:18,900 --> 00:18:23,500

So two of you and the body of work that you are developing and sharing is

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00:18:23,500 --> 00:18:24,400

just remarkable.

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00:18:24,800 --> 00:18:29,700

Amy: Yeah, yeah, well certainly, you know, the program itself with Distance

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00:18:29,700 --> 00:18:29,800

Dance

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00:18:30,000 --> 00:18:31,100

is in its infancy.

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00:18:31,100 --> 00:18:36,300

We do have one other teacher who works from Sydney.

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00:18:36,300 --> 00:18:41,800

So she is based in Sydney and she does one of our Acro classes and

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00:18:41,800 --> 00:18:44,400

sometimes fills in for our contemporary class online.

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00:18:45,200 --> 00:18:50,600

But yes, certainly we will be putting out feelers out to connect with

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00:18:50,600 --> 00:18:54,800

other like-minded teachers who feel that they might like to join the

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00:18:54,800 --> 00:18:55,800

team as well.

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00:18:56,300 --> 00:18:59,100

So, you know, like I said we're sort of building the program.

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00:18:59,100 --> 00:18:59,900

Still at the moment,

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00:19:00,000 --> 00:19:04,100

but certainly in the future, we will be very interested to see if

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00:19:04,100 --> 00:19:06,400

there's any other like-minded teachers out there who would be

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00:19:06,400 --> 00:19:09,800

interested in joining the team. Lou: Talk about your journey.

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00:19:10,800 --> 00:19:15,500

So in the world of dance, how did this all begin for you?

315

00:19:16,200 --> 00:19:23,200

Amy: Yeah, look, um, when I was a little girl, my family always lived

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00:19:23,200 --> 00:19:28,600

rurally and remotely, and I grew up being raised on cattle stations in

317

00:19:28,800 --> 00:19:29,800

North West Queensland.

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00:19:29,900 --> 00:19:36,800

And so we lived 365km away from Mackay at the time for sort of like

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00:19:36,800 --> 00:19:38,000

the start of my dance journey.

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00:19:38,000 --> 00:19:38,700

I suppose.

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00:19:39,700 --> 00:19:45,500

And Mum took me into town to see a Variety Night concert when I was

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00:19:45,500 --> 00:19:51,500

about four years old and I just very vividly, remember seeing little

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00:19:51,500 --> 00:19:57,900

girls in tap shoes and pink tutus and I was sold. (Laughter)

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00:20:00,000 --> 00:20:01,400

So I really, really wanted to dance.

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00:20:01,400 --> 00:20:05,400

So, I begged mum for about two years, I think I spent begging mum to

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00:20:05,400 --> 00:20:10,300

take me to dance classes and she finally gave in and the miles

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00:20:10,300 --> 00:20:10,900

started.

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00:20:10,900 --> 00:20:18,300

So, you know for me the distances are all the part of it and certainly

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00:20:18,500 --> 00:20:23,900

certainly have shaped my view on what I feel is possible and will

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00:20:23,900 --> 00:20:28,400

always challenge...I will always challenge distance and I think

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00:20:28,400 --> 00:20:29,800

that's because of

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00:20:29,900 --> 00:20:35,900

the way that my journey started as a young girl. Obviously, being from

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00:20:35,900 --> 00:20:39,500

a rural background, it always meant that I had to go off to boarding

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00:20:39,500 --> 00:20:40,100

school.

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00:20:40,600 --> 00:20:44,900

So when the time came, I went off to boarding school in Toowoomba and I

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00:20:44,900 --> 00:20:49,700

received amazing training part of an Elite Training Program, run by a

337

00:20:49,700 --> 00:20:50,900

teacher called Bonita Wally.

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00:20:51,300 --> 00:20:56,700

And they prepared me for my years that I, then spent at WAAPA.

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00:20:56,800 --> 00:20:59,800

So I then was accepted into the Western Australian Academy

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00:21:00,000 --> 00:21:00,200

of



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00:21:00,200 --> 00:21:01,100

Performing Arts.

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00:21:01,300 --> 00:21:02,900

Lou: So you went all the way across to the west!

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00:21:04,700 --> 00:21:05,400

Amy: Yeah, yep.

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00:21:05,400 --> 00:21:05,800

That's right.

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00:21:05,800 --> 00:21:11,100

Again, distance is certainly playing a part but not a boundary.

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00:21:11,100 --> 00:21:14,900

And yeah, I went across to Western Australia and spent three years

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00:21:14,900 --> 00:21:20,400

studying my BA in Dance, where I certainly became most interested in

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00:21:20,400 --> 00:21:22,900

contemporary dance and performing contemporary dance.

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00:21:22,900 --> 00:21:28,200

And then following that, I had a, an amazing year with LINK Dance

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00:21:28,200 --> 00:21:28,900

Company.

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00:21:30,000 --> 00:21:35,700

And yeah, we traveled to many different European countries.

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00:21:36,700 --> 00:21:42,800

And yeah, once I had finished up with my year with them, I came home

353

00:21:42,800 --> 00:21:46,300

to Julia Creek where my family were all living at the time.

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00:21:46,300 --> 00:21:50,300

And I ran a small workshop.

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00:21:50,800 --> 00:21:55,400

The, you know, obviously the families and things found out that I was

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00:21:55,400 --> 00:21:59,300

a dancer and they asked for a workshop.

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00:21:59,300 --> 00:21:59,800

So

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00:22:00,100 --> 00:22:04,200

You know, I said, well, why I guess I could, I guess I could do that.

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00:22:04,200 --> 00:22:08,300

So, so, I did and I loved it.

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00:22:08,300 --> 00:22:13,600

I had been teaching as a part-time teacher for another dance studio

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00:22:13,600 --> 00:22:18,400

when I was studying myself at University, I did have some teaching

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00:22:18,400 --> 00:22:23,600

experience and I do, I've always loved teaching and I think, you know,

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00:22:23,600 --> 00:22:27,100

that's shaped by having had brilliant teachers myself, they were

364

00:22:27,100 --> 00:22:28,300

always very inspiring.

365

00:22:28,300 --> 00:22:29,600

So I have

366

00:22:29,900 --> 00:22:34,000

major love for performing myself, but I think that my desire to

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00:22:34,000 --> 00:22:38,300

teach is possibly stronger. I just fell into it basically because it you

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00:22:38,300 --> 00:22:40,000

know, a workshop turned into:

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00:22:40,000 --> 00:22:43,800

Oh I guess I could do one term, and I did a term.

370

00:22:43,800 --> 00:22:44,900

Oh no I could do the year,

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00:22:44,900 --> 00:22:48,000

Yeah, I could definitely do the year, so it turned into a year and seven

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00:22:48,000 --> 00:22:49,400

and a half years later.

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00:22:49,900 --> 00:22:54,100

It's honestly just kept growing and yeah, my love for teaching has

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00:22:54,400 --> 00:22:59,600

taken over and and I think too, I think there's that real

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00:22:59,900 --> 00:23:05,600

passion and connection behind all that we do and all that we offer.

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00:23:05,600 --> 00:23:11,700

Just just because of of being those little kids that I teach right

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00:23:11,700 --> 00:23:17,200

now, I was one of them and it's just I do truly understand how

378

00:23:17,200 --> 00:23:20,600

important it is and what it means to have access to dance.

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00:23:20,600 --> 00:23:24,400

when you live in a remote location, I believe talent has a home everywhere.

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00:23:24,400 --> 00:23:29,300

And I just think you know, and with things like the dance competition

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00:23:29,300 --> 00:23:29,900

that

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00:23:29,900 --> 00:23:35,600

we run and the youth performing arts company that we run it's all

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00:23:35,600 --> 00:23:41,800

about that giving talent a stage and a platform to be shared

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00:23:42,700 --> 00:23:45,300

because that's what it really what it's all about.

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00:23:45,300 --> 00:23:51,400

It's about finding ways to share the talent and certainly that's on

386

00:23:51,400 --> 00:23:55,800

the horizon for the youth dance company is, I'd love to in the future,

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00:23:56,000 --> 00:23:59,800

be able to take the company to other parts of Australia

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00:24:00,100 --> 00:24:03,400

and connect them with audiences from, you know, coastal areas or metro

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00:24:03,400 --> 00:24:05,700

areas and share their talents.

390

00:24:05,700 --> 00:24:10,500

Because I think that people are constantly surprised of the talent

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00:24:10,500 --> 00:24:14,300

that lives in these areas. Lou: most definitely

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00:24:14,300 --> 00:24:17,900

and one of the things that I loved about your entire philosophy, when

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00:24:17,900 --> 00:24:21,800

I was reading about you a little bit is, there's this whole

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00:24:21,800 --> 00:24:25,600

feeling of no borders, you know, there's no boundaries

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00:24:25,600 --> 00:24:29,800

and it doesn't matter where you are, there's viability,

396

00:24:30,000 --> 00:24:35,100

there's opportunity and that's one of the things that,

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00:24:35,100 --> 00:24:38,300

you know, Branches' bring to whole of communities.

398

00:24:38,600 --> 00:24:43,500

How important to you is, and looking at the growth and how you started,

399

00:24:43,500 --> 00:24:48,500

that connection between community, family and opportunity?

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00:24:49,400 --> 00:24:49,800

Amy: Hmm.

401

00:24:49,900 --> 00:24:56,400

Look it's it all rolls in and it's equal benefit.

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00:24:56,400 --> 00:24:56,600

really.

403

00:24:56,600 --> 00:24:59,200

It's just, it's quite amazing.

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00:24:59,200 --> 00:24:59,800

Even, you know.

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00:24:59,900 --> 00:25:04,000

I actually have in the last couple of years, started a family of my own

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00:25:04,000 --> 00:25:04,600

as well.

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00:25:04,600 --> 00:25:06,500

So I'm a working mother.

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00:25:06,500 --> 00:25:13,700

I have two small children, 1 and 3 and my husband is a paramedic in the



409

00:25:13,700 --> 00:25:14,600

town that we live in.

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00:25:14,600 --> 00:25:21,200

And, yeah, I guess we, we are very fortunate to be in the position

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00:25:21,200 --> 00:25:25,000

that we're in to be able to do what we do.

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00:25:25,000 --> 00:25:28,000

So it really it's it complements each other, you know, it's a great

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00:25:28,000 --> 00:25:29,600

opportunity for

414

00:25:29,900 --> 00:25:34,300

us as a young family to have a great family life and have my

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00:25:34,300 --> 00:25:38,300

children, be able to be a part of my work and things like that because

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00:25:38,300 --> 00:25:43,300

you know, I think it wouldn't necessarily work if I was trying to go back

417

00:25:43,300 --> 00:25:46,500

into a workforce or a workplace as such.

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00:25:46,500 --> 00:25:53,500

So yeah, look it's certainly really important to me that, you know, we

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00:25:53,500 --> 00:25:58,700

get to live and work as a family in the communities and and teach and

420

00:25:58,700 --> 00:25:59,600

teach kids

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00:26:00,000 --> 00:26:04,200

that are friends with my kids and yeah, it all just rolls in together

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00:26:05,000 --> 00:26:05,500

Lou: Thank you so much

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00:26:05,500 --> 00:26:06,900

Amy for your time today.

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00:26:06,900 --> 00:26:10,100

It has just been wonderful to talk to you and for all our listeners.

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00:26:10,100 --> 00:26:13,100

Please, jump onto Branches Performing Arts and have a look at this

426

00:26:13,100 --> 00:26:17,700

tremendous body of work that the team are delivering across vast areas

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00:26:17,700 --> 00:26:21,800

and you can catch them and have a look at their website on

428

00:26:22,100 --> 00:26:28,200

www.branchesperformingarts.dance, which is the new way of websites

429

00:26:28,200 --> 00:26:28,900

moving forward.

430

00:26:28,900 --> 00:26:29,800

So make sure you jump

431

00:26:29,900 --> 00:26:32,800

on there and have a look and of course Amy and her team you'll find

432

00:26:32,800 --> 00:26:36,300

under @branchesperformingarts on Instagram and Facebook accounts.

433

00:26:36,500 --> 00:26:38,800

And Amy thank you so much for your time.

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00:26:38,800 --> 00:26:42,300

And most importantly, I think keep dancing and safe travels.

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00:26:44,200 --> 00:26:46,500

Amy: Yeah, thank you so much for having me.

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00:26:46,600 --> 00:26:47,200

its been an honour.